No 18 September 1984

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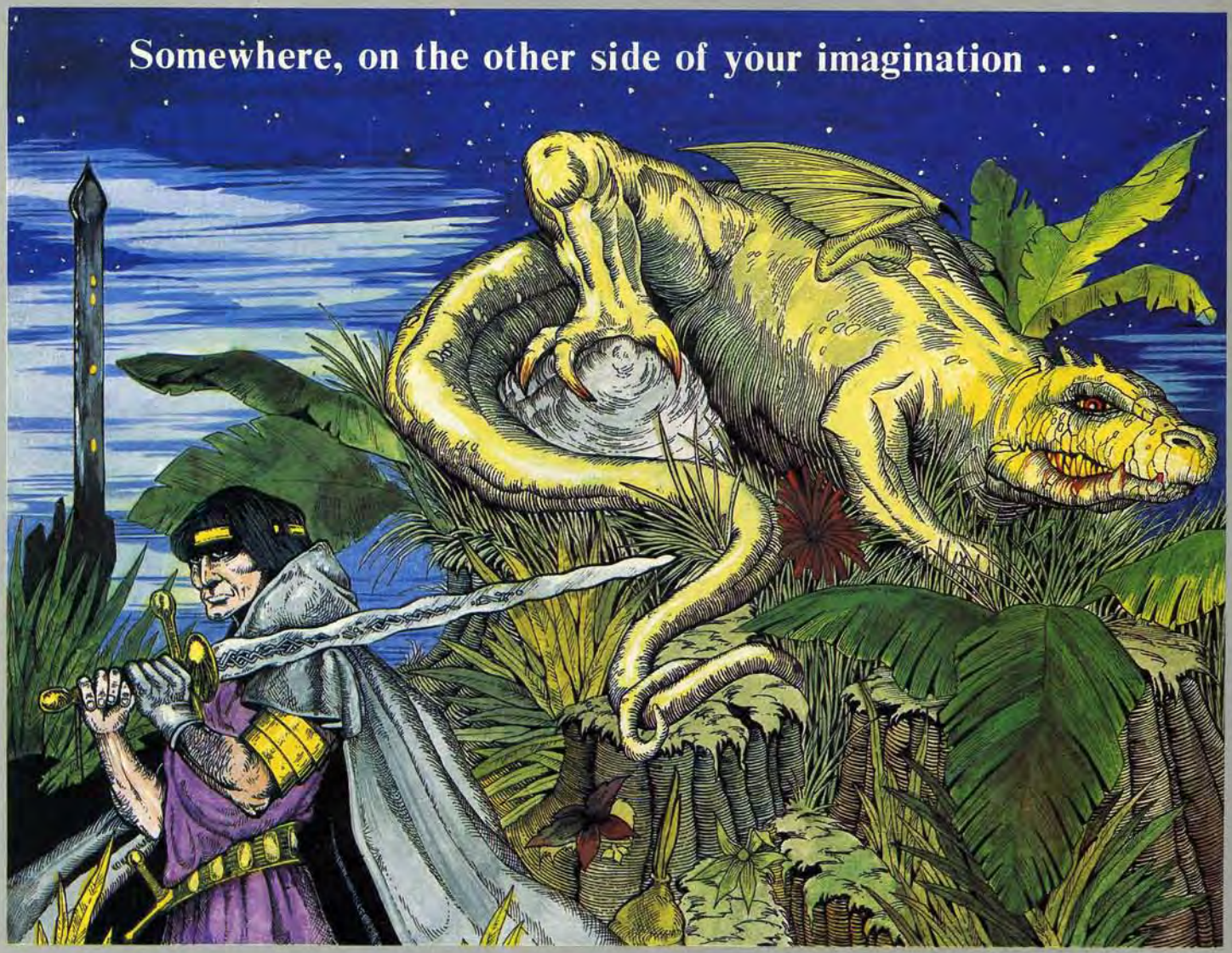

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Editorial

Hasn't it been a glorious summer? All that sunshine; I bet a few of you are sporting pretty healthy tans. OK, there have been a few trifling annoyances along the way, like the miners' strike, and the dismal performances of the Test side, and that Walt Disney Games thing in Los Angeles, and the water shortage.... but even so, as summers go, I know you've all had a good time.

How do I know? I could claim **clairvoyance** as an ability, but everyone here keeps reminding me that I can't spell (groan!). No, the reason I know that you've all been frolicking out in the outdoors, doing healthy things in the clean fresh air (pity about all the stubble burning, wasn't it?) is that we've had a noticeable downturn on letters, phonecalls, and carrier kobolds, and, to be frank, we're very worried. Isn't it about time you young player chappies stopped all this having fun and got back to some serious orc-thumping? Think of your characters, locked away in desks and cupboards, lonely, abandoned; think of all those fearsome monsters, wondering if they'll ever see a tinned meals-on-legs again. Have a heart! Let's get back to healthy, senseless mayhem again before it's too late!

Paul Cockburn

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..... Editor **Keith Thomson** ..... Assistant Editor **Paul Cockburn** .....
..... Editorial Assistant **Kim Daniel** ..... Features Assistant **Mike Brunton** .....
..... Art **Phil Kaye** ..... Advertising **Lesley Hudson-Jessop** .....
..... News **Doug Cowie** .....
..... This month's contributing artists: **Robin Grenville Evans, Ed Dovey, Christian Holl, Geoff Hobbs, Pete Young, Alan Gambrill** .....
..... Cover **Knight Hawks** by Jim Burns.....
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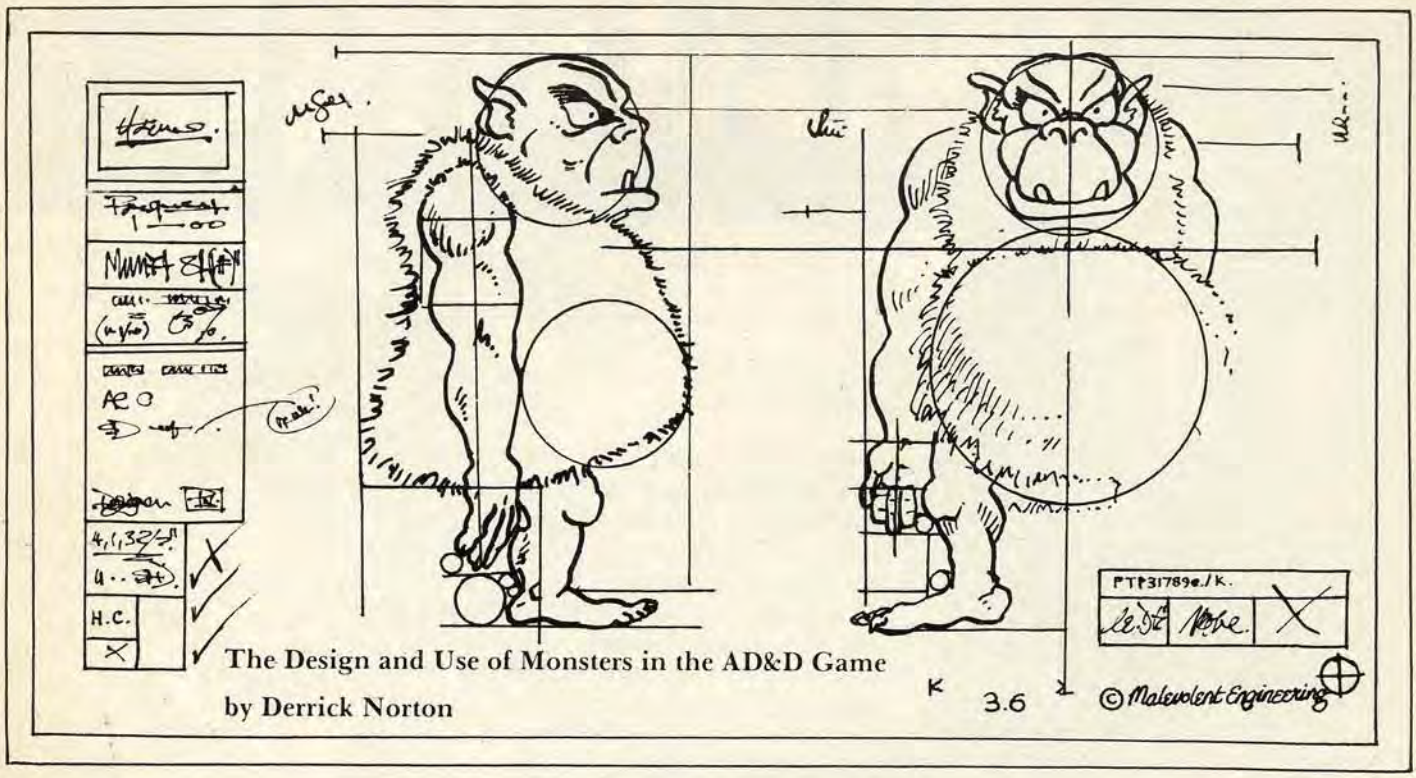
MALEVOLENT ENGINEERING:



It is no exaggeration to state that the spilt blood of monsters constitutes a great part of the life-blood of the AD&D® game. AD&D is a combat-oriented system and there can be few (if any) adventures that see the d20 remaining in its box. Unfortunately there are also those campaigns where the d20 hardly ever keeps still, the DM eventually suffering from 'combat-matrix neck' — a complaint induced by all-too-frequently scanning the tables. Whatever school of play one prefers, more like as not the victims in all this gore will be monsters. Occasionally the odd NPC may bite the dust, maybe even the odd PC, but in the main it will be those creatures designated 'not for the squeamish' that fall foul to the **longswords +5**.

What monster is it that terrifies players the most? Which creature, in all the planes from the Abyss to the Seventh Heaven, would cause players to sacrifice Vorpal Blades?

And what monster is it that terrifies players the most? Just which creature, in all the planes from the Abyss to the Seventh Heaven, would cause players to sacrifice Vorpal Blades rather than meet it? It is no use reaching for the **Monster Manual**; the most dreaded creature is the one the players don't know anything about — the DM's own creation!

Just watch the next time an unknown beastie appears in a game. Metal-plated heroes suddenly develop sword-arm cramp; spell-casters ponder about magical defences and hold back with the **fireballs**; thieves decide that the party needs a rearguard and promptly slink off. Ten rounds previously, the same group was annihilating anything that moved, but not so in this case. All realise that the hours spent memorising special attacks and defences, HD and AC, are useless. For once players get a true feel of role-playing: utter terror.

Alright, original and new monsters aren't always so frightening. There is no doubting the fact, though, that such inventions do shake players out of complacency. Used with discretion they can add a real touch of zest to a game. This in no way devalues official monsters. Just because players know of a monster's strengths and weaknesses does not mean they have the capacity to overcome them (personally I know everything possible about owlbears; that has never yet stopped me from dreading the discovery of a nest containing eggs, hairs and feathers). Although familiarity breeds contempt, it is worthwhile giving consideration to the use of official monsters before continuing with the design of new ones.

Very often the boredom expressed by players on meeting a monster is the fault of the situation rather than the monster itself. No experienced player is going to be stimulated by 20 kobolds charging down a passage. Players might be nervous if the character is a 1st level magic user, but one could hardly hope to capture their imagination. As has been said by others, to be exciting, old monsters need to be placed in new situations. This can either be done in a literal sense or by imaginative use of its existing specialities. To all intents and purposes this will produce a new monster; players having to behave differently in order to fight it.

Such use is not only stimulating by novelty. The fact that players know a creature's statistics deadens play, allowing 'characters' to devise tactics for any given problem or battle. A thief (calculating the chances of success) may attempt to outflank the creature in order to try a backstab; a mage will use a **light** spell rather than a **fireball** so as to blind a creature that has a gaze attack. When facing new monsters, players will have neither the information nor the confidence to behave in such ways. A thief could almost be classed as foolhardy for trying to get behind a novel creature, thus becoming separated from the rest of the party, without waiting to see how the fighters were doing at the front. If they require a natural 20 to hit, then what chance a backstab?

The strategy of placing old monsters in new settings is a reasonable one for the DM to employ. The same cannot automatically be said of altering official monsters by changing their basic statistics or descriptions. Players will not be amused when creatures that look and

behave like mind-flayers turn out to be a rebel sub-species. Especially when those same players have just paid 100,000gp to some githyanki mercenaries only to arrive later to find a githyanki/mind-flayer alliance all set on attacking the characters. To be fair, all such scenarios should include an 'escape clause'. Clues should be left that would indicate that something is amiss.

Put another way, a goblin with 1HD is no longer a goblin. The desire to change a monster's statistics needs to be viewed with care. Properly thought out it can introduce new avenues of adventure. Be prepared for disgruntled players though, if after 12 spectres each incapable of draining, the 13th drains life-levels quite normally.

So much for official monsters. Although their inclusion in novel situations is a primary aid in designing a scenario, it is obvious that there are limits to a DM's inventiveness. Taking into account the problems already mentioned in altering official creatures, a DM will find it easier (or maybe even feel inspired) to develop a totally new monster. However, such a task is not as easy as it seems.

Most monsters are designed initially with a specific location, level or party in mind. For this to be done successfully the creation must fall within whatever (broad) limits the DM seeks to impose on it, even if these limitations are sub-conscious. Design involves the manipulation and consideration of 16 standard parameters, from Frequency to Psionics. The actual options available for each parameter rises from approximately 3 (Size) to near infinity (Special Attacks/Defences). Bearing in mind that the description following the statistics can profoundly affect a monster's modus operandi, one can appreciate that a large number of decisions must be made in order to create even the humblest organism. Furthermore, the actual values chosen cannot in themselves predict a monster's eligibility for a specific role. One must remember that interactions between parameters will subtly affect a monster's performance.

In the following section the 16 basic parameters are reviewed, examining how each one influences the nature of combat, and to a lesser extent, scenarios in general. Some comments are also applicable to the running of official monsters.

FREQUENCY

A little used term since most monsters are placed by the DM. It may seem a waste of time designing a creature if one is to be restricted by the label 'Extremely rare'. To be consistent with existing rules the term should be used when adding a creature to random encounter tables.

NUMBER APPEARING

Again a term rarely used without modification by the DM. Consequently the actual range chosen has little effect on play since numbers are usually pre-set. Still, if a range must be given, a useful guide is alignment. It is more likely that lawful creatures will congregate in large numbers than chaotic ones; the former having a disposition to tribal lifestyles while the latter are more prone to form family units. Another indication might be the envisaged source of food. On average herbivores and omnivores exist in far greater numbers than carnivores or scavengers. The more intelligent a creature, the more likely that it will develop some kind of food cultivation (animal domestication, agriculture), thus allowing a higher density of individuals to live in an area.

Often creations of a powerful nature are given the number 1. This should be considered carefully since it may allow characters to employ the 'sardine manoeuvre': all concerned rush into combat and so gain bonus attacks from behind. Using this principle I have seen 2nd level characters slay a lone hill giant with no loss of life to the party. Positioning the monster in an enclosed space may help prevent such outflanking. Even so, unless it also has abilities that would allow it to plough through a line of fighters, it will probably be subject to spell attack from a magic user standing well away from combat. One easy way around this is to introduce more than one individual, thus splitting the party's firepower. If the new monster is too powerful to duplicate, one can always give it a couple of pets or allies.

At the other extreme, a lot of individuals attacking together are easy prey to a well-placed spell caster, acting as experience fodder to area-effect spells. It is a simple job to inject a feeling of frustration in a spell caster by having the monsters attack in small groups from many sides. If there is one thing a magic user hates it is having to **fireball** a few individuals when many more are in sight but not in the area of effect.

ARMOUR CLASS

This value has one effect only; it makes monsters harder to hit. But what an effect it is! Given the choice between a creature with good AC/poor HD and one with poor AC/good HD, most players would opt for the latter. There is something quite disheartening about never hitting an opponent.

In broad terms any increase in AC extends the operating life of a monster in combat. While such extension can also be achieved by increasing HD, this, as will be seen, has drawbacks not induced by altering AC. This, coupled with the dislike players have for missing what they aim for, means that such monsters are tailor-made to stop characters racing to the heart of a dungeon too quickly, at least until they have concocted a workable strategy.

Faced with such a monster, players usually employ spells since these are independent of armour class. Remember, though, unlike such factors as Damage and HD, players will be able to deduce AC from their own efforts. It is dangerous to assume low hit points will counterbalance the effects of high AC; players can and do roll badly. If this happens the monster becomes a runaway train, with characters falling right, left and centre. The DM is then forced to do some quick thinking to avoid being left without a party to referee.

Increasing AC is not the only option open to a DM wishing to decrease a monster's chances of being hit. Giving a creature partial or total immunity to certain weapon types can be more entertaining than simply upping armour class. A ghast's stench and a displacer beast's shimmer both have the same net effect on AC but can be countered by very different methods. By inventing similar effects a DM allows characters to employ specific counter-measures instead of just wishing for a +5 weapon.

MOVEMENT

Not only is the rate important, but also the type. When employing the more esoteric modes of travel it is essential that the DM fully understands the appropriate rules. A creature's movement, as experienced by players, is usually towards or away from them and thus of direct concern. A factor best considered in advance is the fact that characters will rarely be able to outrun something with a movement rate of 15" or above. Characters hate to see monsters escaping from melee (all that experience going to waste).

In a powerful creature slowness can be a desirable quality if the DM suspect that it might be too potent for the party to deal with. Low movement rate decreases a monster's 'danger ratio' without unduly affecting its combat prowess. That is, it allows characters to run away when all else fails. Limited teleport ability can always be given to an otherwise lethargic creature.

HIT DICE

Unlike AC, a monster's HD has more than one effect. Not only does it directly dictate a monster's chances of hitting an opponent, it also affects the amount of damage it can sustain. High HD creatures also gain advantages with respect to certain spells (eg **sleep, command**) and benefit from better saving throws. Thus (without manipulation), one single effect cannot be altered without changing all the others.

All is not lost, however, and there is wide scope for a DM to create monsters with a specific aim in mind. For example, it is a fact that characters usually achieve good AC values before they significantly improve the amount of damage they can inflict (or indeed can themselves take). A DM might decide to counter high character AC by increasing the average HD of creatures in the dungeon. Other things being equal, this would also have the side-effect of increasing the time required by characters to remove the monster's hit points. A better tactic might be to address the problem directly and give a low-HD monster a 'to hit' bonus. Yet another (which this time improves saving throws) would be to give a monster high HD but to restrict the point per die (as with dragons).

Eventually, though, characters will increase the amount of damage they can inflict, and it may be that monsters are dying far too quickly. To counter this, one need only add a bonus number of hit points to HD. Again this leaves saving throws unaffected.

% IN LAIR

Depending on the personal habits of a monster, its location in a lair will affect combat to a greater or lesser extent. As seen with the ettercap, a monster can put its lair to good use. After all, its own knowledge of the local area is bound to give it an advantage over intruders: a retreating monster might flee across a seemingly shallow pool but (as the characters might discover to their cost) this is due to the cunning placement of underwater stepping stones in an otherwise 15' deep pond.

Obviously a monster's intelligence (and perhaps numbers) will indicate just what will be done with a lair. So, rather than act as a mere source of treasure the imaginative use of a lair can promote or demote a monster at the DM's whim.

TREASURE TYPE

At first inspection this seems to have little importance to the design of a new monster. Far from it. While the range of treasure a creature might possess has little effect until after the fight, the actual items it possesses can influence play a great deal. If the creature could conceivably use a magic item then it should do so. This demands regulation on the part of the DM since most items are primarily designed to be employed by characters. When used against them the effect can be devastating. If a monster has the intelligence to control magic then it probably has the intelligence to use it for optimum results. This can be summarised by a rule of thumb: if a magic item is too powerful to use on a party, it is probably too powerful to be owned by that party.

One interesting but rare use of monetary treasure concerns the purchase of various services and/or equipment. Very often monsters sit on huge hoards of wealth but lack any decent armour, weapons or whatever. Such behaviour is conceivable for dragon-kind, but not for lesser creatures that need all the aid they can get.

NUMBER OF ATTACKS

Without designating damage range, the relevance of multiple attacks is small. Even so, the ability itself does affect a player's perception of a monster. Fighters spend a great deal of time and effort striving to reach a level that allows 2 attacks per round. It is no surprise then that creatures with multiple attacks have such a demoralising effect. Their greater chance of striking first in a round is very nerve-wracking to characters near zero hit points. In such circumstances characters are very reluctant to turn and flee. Whereas one hit might miss, it is unlikely that all 5 will do so. Monsters with multiple attacks are also the bane of spell casters, who are limited to trying very quick spells.

DAMAGE

Imagine a player reading the description of a monster for the first time. One could be fairly sure that the major focus of interest (after the name) would be the amount of damage it could inflict. When all is said and done this is the one factor, more than any other, that makes its mark on characters. Exotic modes of slaughter such as **power word kill** are extremely rare; characters usually perish by being clawed, bitten, gored or hacked to death.

Note that it would be wrong to view a 10-100 haymaker as equivalent to a 10 x 1-10 left jabs. Even without resorting to complex statistics it is obvious that in the former case the minimum damage is 10 points, comparing with only 1 point in the latter case. For a DM more concerned with play balance than with strict adherence to the dice, multiple attacks (of little damage each) are a good safety valve in the design of new monsters.

Little else can be said about the assignment of damage. Its relevance to characters is so great though that it is a good policy to leave the decision to the last. The DM can then review the creature's other abilities before choosing an appropriate damage range. If a high range is envisaged the DM should carefully consider the estimated number of monsters in the encounter. The more individuals there are, the greater the chance that thieves and magic-users will be physically involved. It does not take much to flatten even high level wizards.

DMs would benefit from becoming resigned to the fact that their loving creations are most probably going to be slain, and avoid indulging in protectionism.

SPECIAL ATTACKS/DEFENCES

It is ironic that the section most open to inventiveness has the least to be said about it. Given the almost limitless range of options (standard and original), it would be naïve, not to say presumptious, to try and provide anything but the simplest overview.

When choosing special powers one could do far worse than have some sort of rationale in mind. As an example, a creature from the elemental plane of fire would not normally be able to create an **ice-storm**. Further sub-divisions might restrict a monster to one class of spells (eg clerical, magical) or to a specific category of magic (eg abjuration, phantasm, necromantic). Don't choose the first powers that spring to mind. It is useful to start with an extensive list, but only to pick those abilities that are complementary and can lead to novel results when used in conjunction with each other.

MAGIC RESISTANCE

A fairly simple choice, this. Either the monster has it or it hasn't. At high level play, it is almost mandatory since characters have many spells that do not have a save, or even if the save is made still do half effect. For those without resistance the DM can always designate some other modification (as with doppelgangers).

If a creature is to have magic resistance (MR), what percentage should be given? Taking into account the '+/-5% per level' effect, an excellent rule of thumb is a value of 5% per level of play. Thus in a 1st level dungeon a monster with 5% MR has just over an evens chance (55%) of negating any effect. By following this guideline (which should be ignored by exceptionally powerful monsters), the same chance is seen at all levels of play.

INTELLIGENCE

The manner in which a monster fights and behaves is largely determined by this score. Often the decision will be a mere formality, complementing whatever other descriptions are given. It can sometimes be useful to remember that, as with characters, high intelligence does not automatically correlate with high wisdom. Interesting foibles can be developed bearing this aspect in mind.

ALIGNMENT

When taken with intelligence the philosophical path followed by a monster is a good indication of behaviour in times of stress. The DM should consider the reason why a new monster has a specific alignment, especially the more intelligent types. A monster's own perception of the world is a worthy explanation for its presence in a scenario and helps create a believable fantasy milieu.

SIZE

Most DMs moan when large creatures are chopped into chunks by fighters wielding two-handed swords. Aesthetically pleasing as it might be, a high HD creature need not be large. Take a tip from player characters — how many 10' humans can you recall?

A more mundane problem concerns movement. Nothing is more embarrassing than a player wondering aloud how an 18' tall cloud giant could get through a 6' high, 2' wide door....

PSIONICS

For some reason psionic monsters only ever appear in scenarios that have psionic characters. No wonder such characters get paranoid about their skill. While the pure attack and defence modes might not be required by monsters, the various disciplines can come in extremely useful in otherwise un-psionic campaigns. The same comments seen for Special Attacks/Defences are also applicable to this category. One entertaining use of psionics concerns bluffing the player characters, the monster pretending to use a wand, or cast a spell, while really exercising some psionic discipline. As with all special powers the DM should fully understand the relevant rules. The very speed of psionic encounters can lead to errors if not properly prepared in advance.

* * * *

At the end of all the statistics comes the monster's description. This has two main objectives. The first is to provide relevant background information, explaining the monster's role in the scheme of things. The second is to flesh out the bare statistics, detailing special attacks and so forth. Seen as a whole the description acts as a final modifier of the creature's behaviour. For example, a mind flayer's described action in a time of stress (desertion) runs contrary to the general notions of its alignment (LE).

One insidious temptation is to make the description overtly complex, especially with tribal or ultra-powerful monsters. That comprehensive list of spells and abilities may look impressive but the DM has got to remember all of it, in what may prove to be a noisy and tense situation. Too often, the DM attempts to provide a course of action for every type of situation in which the monster might be found, losing track of the original purpose in a wealth of detail. It is best not to try to plan for every possible contingency at the expense of clarity.

This introduces the idea of 'protectionism'. DMs would, in the long run, benefit by becoming resigned to the fact that their loving creations are going to be fought and most likely slain. Players are keenly aware of a DM's decisions when a new monster is introduced into a game, picking up any undue favouritism, something which can erode their confidence. If a new monster is quickly beaten, the design work need not go to waste and another encounter can be added at a later stage, perhaps a vengeance squad looking for the killer of the first creature. Be careful that the revenge is restricted to the monster though. Changing statistics in response to the players' winning tactics is blatantly an effort to get even.

A far more subtle form of protectionism can occur at the design stage, with monsters being given quite mind-boggling powers (for the level) in an unconscious desire to see it survive. It is a false assumption that in order to be 'good' a monster must be powerful. Anyone can create an invincible monster, what is required in a good monster is one that is different. It is the unusual aspects of a monster that stick in a player's mind, not necessarily its high AC or HD.

One method of achieving a distinctive creature is to provide it with a combination of talents that work well together. In other words, to give the creature internal logic. All the favourite monsters from fantasy literature possess that quality, and a DM must make the effort to capture it when describing them in FRP game terms. Not only pleasing in an artistic sense, internal consistency is of prime practical use. Everyday experience shows that facts are better remembered when they are organised. Such organisation reveals itself the first time the monster is encountered, the flow of play being uninterrupted by halts to work out what the creature will do next. After some sort of base is developed it is a relatively easy task to assign values to the various headings.

One last point. Although in this account each of the basic parameters has been dealt with separately, it was not my intention to suggest that monsters should be designed in a piecemeal fashion. It is easier to get good results by starting with a rough sketch and painting in the details afterwards. When all this is done the DM only needs to find a suitable name for the beast. Personally, I find this always seems to take the longest!

Derrick Norton

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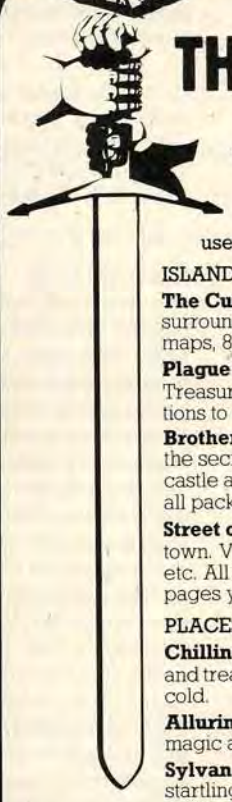

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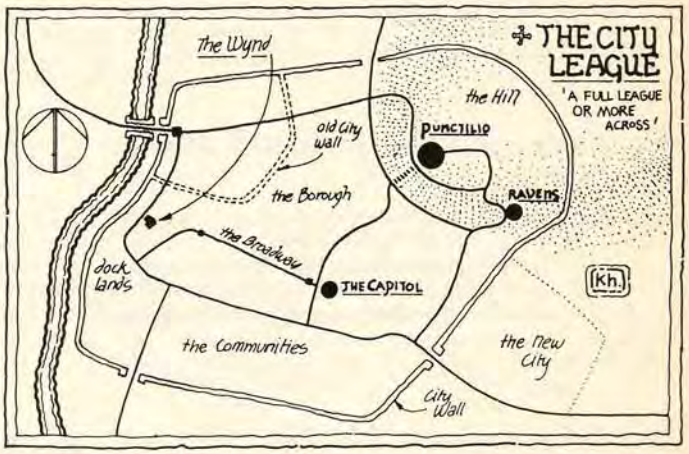
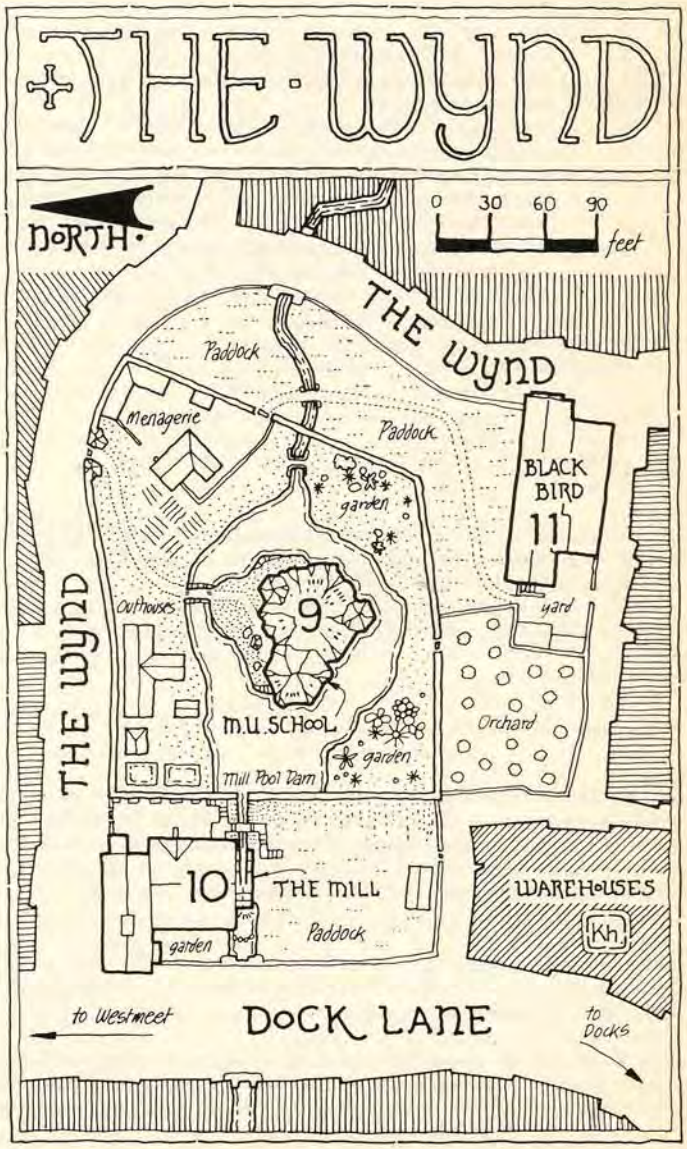
PELINORE

THE WYND

9 The MAGIC USERS' SCHOOL

This Magic Users' school is the ironic result of the ambition of four men, brought to fruition by the bitter disappointment of one. Malachite Burwright (**9a**), Fiorrantanis (**9b**), Dispor the True (**9c**) and Porsena Mays (**9d**) were friends at a huge magical academy within the City who wanted to set up on their own. Tragedy struck when Malachite lost his right arm in an accident, ending his career. The tragedy was allayed when he inherited a swampy piece of land behind his family's Mill (**10**) on which he built a tower for his friends to use. The local people look on the school with much awe and pride. Since it brings much wealth into the district, anyone harming the place would bring the whole neighbourhood down around their ears. When dealing with MUs and Illusionists who want to learn new spells, the occupants always prefer to be paid in magical items and spells they do not have rather than money. No matter what system is used the price will be high. For example, spells will only be exchanged for higher level spells.
AD&D game: all cantrips, first and second level spells for MUs and Illusionists can be found here. Third to fifth level spells are restricted to those concerned with Alteration and Illusion/Phantasm due to the interests of the researchers. There are no spells above fifth level. These spells are not in spellbooks but are kept in scrolls, tomes and codices.
D&D game: all first to fifth level spells are available, they are kept in the many works of reference in the building.





9a Malachite Burwright; Fr8/Fr8; N/NG; hp 25/34; AC 7/8; Staff

H/H
S 11 ☐ *Heavy leather greatcoat over long grey shirt, boots, only one arm (left)*
I 18
W 14 ☐ *Steward of the MU school*
D 11 ☐ *At peace with himself after a long struggle, mild but firm*
C 15 ☐ *Brother of Jasper Burwright (**10a**), brother-in-law of Fond Celine (**11a**), friendly with Mylites Ep-stine (**2a**), well known amongst local trades people*
Ch 12

9b Fiorrantanis; MU10/MU11; L/LN; hp30/32; AC4/0; No weapon

H/H
S 9 ☐ *White, silk shirt, crimson leggings strapped with leather, **ring of protection +3**, (in AD&D game only – **bracers of defence AC5** in the form of a silver head band)*
I 18
W 12 ☐ *Wizard*
D 16 ☐ *Vain, haughty and distant, but wishes he wasn't*
C 9 ☐ *Knows Jasper Burwright (**10a**), Fond Celine (**11a**); his twin brother, Deorrantanis (**50a**), is a Redemptor at the Court of the Ten Thousand Ravens; his familiar, Wart (**10j**), is strategically placed in the nearby Mill (**10**)*
Ch 8

Spells memorised:

D&D	*AD&D*
1 (2,6,7,9)	*1 (6,16,20,22)*
2 (6,12,13)	*2 (4,7,8)*
3 (4,5,7)	*3 (9,11,13)*
4 (12)	*4 (24)*
5 (10)	*5 (20)*

9c Dispor the True; MU10/I10; N/NG; hp 27/27; AC 1/1; Dagger

H/H
S 10 ☐ *Dark blue robes, blue suede boots, yellow cloak (**displacer cloak/cloak of displacement**), **ring of protection +4***
I 18
W 13 ☐ *Wizard/Illusionist*
D 17 ☐ *Rational, intellectual, doesn't suffer fools at all*
C 10 ☐ *Knows Jasper Burwright (**10a**), Fond Celine (**11a**), many local beggars who she secretly meets and supports*
Ch 11

Spells memorised:

D&D (MU)	*AD&D (I)*
1 (5,6,9,12)	*1 (1,2,3,11,12)*
2 (5,9,10)	*2 (2,7,12)*
3 (3,7,8)	*3 (5,6,11)*
4 (5)	*4 (6)*
5 (9)	*5 (3)*

9d Porsena Mays; MU10/MU11; N/N; hp 23/24; AC 5/3; No weapon

H/H

S 7
I 18
W 15
D 14
C 9
Ch 16

☐ *Brown jerkin and trews, red slippers, long clay pipe,* ***ring of protection +3****, (in AD&D game only –* ***bracers of defence AC6*** *in the form of leather wristlets)*
☐ *Wizard*
☐ *The image of a kindly uncle, but can be surprisingly nasty*
☐ *Knows Jasper Burwright (**10a**), Fond Celine (**11a**), warm paternal friendship with Olivine (**10c**), popular for his tales in ale-houses throughout Docklands, spends most of his time growing competition vegetables (and cheating! –see spells); his familiar, 'BD' (**11c**), lives at the Black Bird (**11**)*

Spells memorised:

D&D	AD&D
1 (9)	1 (22)
2 (-)	2 (-)
3 (-)	3 (-)
4 (4)	4 (17)
5 (-)	5 (-)

9e Safrine; MU4/MU4; L/LE; hp 16/12; AC 8/10; Dagger

H/H

S 10
I 18
W 9
D 14
C 8
Ch 12

☐ *Long, flowing, feminine gowns*
☐ *Assistant to Fiorrantanis (**9b**)*
☐ *Flirtatious, plausible, helpful, keeps her alignment secret*
☐ *Daughter of Jasper (**10a**), considers her family beneath her, secretly writes to a member of an assassins guild*

Spells memorised:

D&D	AD&D
1 (1,9)	1 (3,18,22)
2 (4,12)	2 (8,24)

9f Droga Orcsdottir; MU3/I3; L/LN; hp 8/8; AC 7/7; Dagger

H/H

S 11
I 18
W 12
D 17
C 14
Ch 11

☐ *Delicately embroidered dresses in many lovely colours*
☐ *Assistant to Dispor the True (**9c**)*
☐ *Heroine-worships Dispor, inferiority complex, cleanliness fetish, brilliant*
☐ *Taken in and reared by Ograffa the Mapmaker (**20a**) as her real parents (his neighbours) beat her, she keeps to herself spending her whole time at the school or at her adopted parent's house; she is convinced the tiny trace of orcish blood in her veins makes her foul and ugly which is why she washes continually and dresses so beautifully and feels inferior – in fact she's a brilliant pupil and charming companion even though she's a little homely. It's a sad case.*

Spells memorised:

D&D (MU)	AD&D (I)
1 (9)	1 (2)
2 (-)	2 (-)

9g Rathe; MU3/MU3; L/LG; hp 13/13; AC 5/6; Dagger

H/½E

S 16
I 18
W 13
D 16
C 16
Ch 14

☐ *Long maroon cloak over colourful blouson and hose,* ***ring of protection + 2***
☐ *Assistant to Porsena Mays (**9d**)*
☐ *Shy, determined, dedicated, hard-working, trusty*
☐ *Son to Race and Goldmeadow (**5a&b**) but rarely sees them, no other contacts*

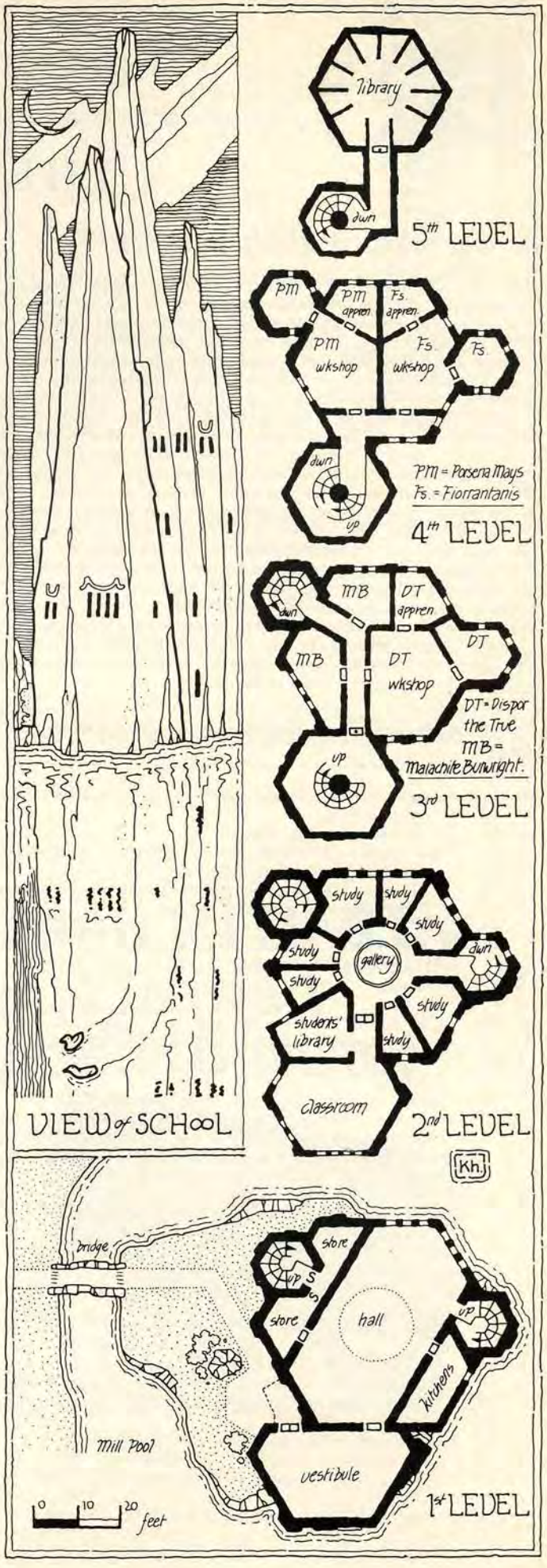
Spells memorised:

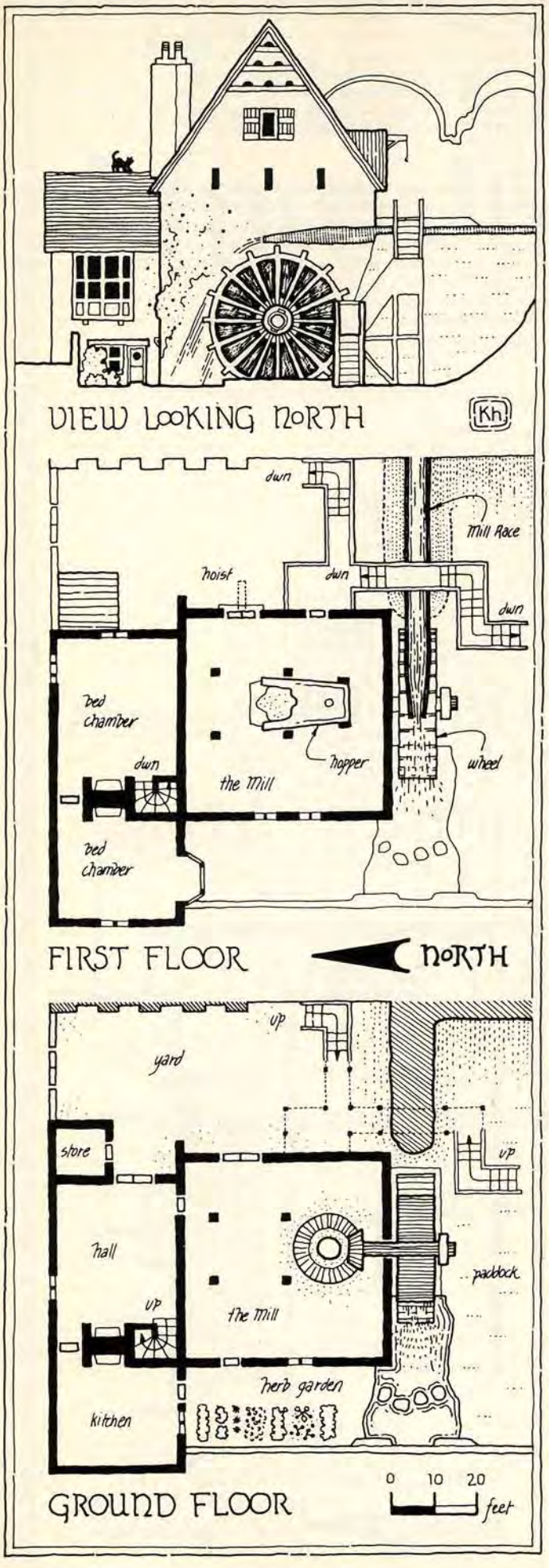
D&D	AD&D
1 (9)	1 (22)
2 (-)	2 (-)

9h Samuel Evening (Fr2/Fr2; hp 7/10; no weapon; H/H) is the establishment's cook. He failed to become an MU at the school but stayed on as cook. In an AD&D game Samuel will use cantrips to aid his culinary skills. He met Ja'n'it (**9i**) at the school and they married. He's very friendly with Manuel and Basil (**11d&e**).

9i Ja'n'it Evening (Fr2/Fr2; hp 6/9; no weapon; E/E) is the stockwoman who looks after all the livestock at the school. She met Samuel (**9h**) at the school and they married.

The general chores are performed by the 30 youngsters who attend the school, under the watchful eyes of Malachite (**9a**), Samuel (**9h**) and Ja'n'it (**9i**). Note that one of these is Thadric Burwright (**11b**). There are no dwarves at the school.





10 THE MILL

Once this Mill must have had a sylvan setting; even today some trees are visible in the grounds behind it. Yet now it is just another building along the main thoroughfare from Westmeet to the Docks. Apparently a mill like any other, a closer look will reveal that this is a building of some antiquity, and though oft repaired and rebuilt the new blends nearly perfectly with the old. As with the building so with the family who have owned and managed it for all these generations: the Burwrights. The present miller is Jasper Burwright, named, like his two brothers, after a magical gem in the hopes that he might 'improve himself' and become a magic-user. Stubbornly, he has stayed at the mill determined to pass his time-honoured skills and the family name onto his sons. Alas for Jasper that he has had seven daughters. He lives there now with his daughters, his wife, his mother and his wife's grandmother. No-one knows whether or not it is for the want of sons that the miller spends many hours in the local ale-house. Be that as it may, the daughters care not; they mill the finest flour this side of the Broadway and are busy making their fortunes.

10a Jasper Burwright; Fr5/Fr5; L/LG; hp 14/22; AC 9/10; Knobbed Stick

H/H	
S 12	☐ *Big, heavy; wears grey shirt and trousers, tight fitting red cap*
I 13	
W 9	☐ *Miller (when Olivine (**10c**) lets him)*
D 10	☐ *Disillusioned, usually drunk and smelly*
C 8	☐ *Knows most of the local traders, is brother of Malachite (**9a**) and brother-in-law of Celine (**11a**), husband of Millipy (**10b**), father of Olivine (**10c**)*
Ch 12	

10b Millipy Burwright; Fr2/Fr2; L/LG; hp 6/8; AC 9/10; No weapon

H/H	
S 9	☐ *Big heavy; wears grey shirt and trousers, tight fitting red cap*
I 13	
W 9	☐ *Seamstress*
D 11	☐ *Phlegmatic, practical, tolerant*
C 8	☐ *Friendly with Celine (**11a**) and knows local traders, wife of Jasper (**10a**), estranged cousin of Framo (**14j**) – a thief*
Ch 7	

10c Olivine Burwright; Fr3/Fr3 L/LG hp 10/16 AC 9/10 Fists

H/H	
S 17	☐ *Huge (6' 4"), beefy; wears grey smock over blue trousers, clogs, towel around waist*
I 13	
W 10	☐ *Miller and proud of it*
D 12	☐ *Quiet spoken, occasionally violent and well respected*
C 10	☐ *Daughter to Millipy (**10b**) and Jasper (**10a**), a well known figure who works hard but socialises little, drinks at the Black Bird (**11**), where she is genuinely liked; she knows a surprising amount about the next door magic-user school because of her friendship with Porsenna Mays (**9d**).*
Ch 11	

10d-g Olivine's sisters, in descending order, are called Safrine (**9e**), **Maratar**, **Emanlia**, Bold Mary (**3d**), **Jasmina** and **Last Hope**. All are Fr1/Fr1; hp4/6 except Safrine who is studying next door at the MU school (**9**), and Bold Mary who works at the Travellers' Shrine (**3**). Last Hope is not a nice name for a little girl, but Jasper had got desperate. In fact, she is the brightest of the bunch.

10h **Pirea Burwright** is Jasper's mother, she is still nagging him to become a magic user. Jasper's pretty fed-up of it.

10i **Mara Goodfellow** is Millipy's grandmother, a bright-eyed sharp-eared old woman who has a pretty shrewd knowledge of most things that are happening locally — the richest source of gossip for miles around. The DM might have her meet the party in many places, from the Ford Inn (**5**) to the Black Bird (**11**) to the Docks to the local street markets. Universally known as 'Jolly'.

10j **Wart Burwright** would not normally be considered here were it not for the fact that he is a very considerable cat. Named after the white spot on his nose (the rest of him being jet black) he is a well-known local personality, making free with the Mill and all the surrounding yards, lanes and buildings. Although the Burwrights would never breathe a word of it he is also Fiorrantanis' (**9b**) familiar.

11 THE BLACK BIRD aka FOND CELINE'S

An unremarkable ale-house, the Black Bird has strong connections with both the Mill (**10**) and the MU school (**9**). Peridot Burwright was the owner until he was murdered by a wandering adventurer (some say it was a thief, others a paladin but it was hard to judge from the little that was left by his brothers — Malachite (**9a**) and Jasper(**10a**)). The ale-house is now belongs to Peridot's widow — Celine Burwright. She's often referred to as Fond Celine as she never recovered from the shock and sometimes appears simple. Still, no-one in their right mind would risk causing trouble in her popular ale-shop as, even if her two helpers didn't see the miscreants off, the mass of her customers would. The surest way to become the most hated person in Docklands is to upset Fond Celine. Recommended prices: as normal for your campaign.

11a **Celine Burwright**; Fr4/Fr4; N/NG; hp 12/18; AC 9/10; No weapon

H/½E
S 8
I 9
W 10
D 12
C 10
Ch 14

- ☐ *Very pretty; wears colourful skirts and blouses, laced sandals, shawl*
- ☐ *Owner of the Black Bird*
- ☐ *Gay, child-like, gullible, then suddenly morose*
- ☐ *Knows Malachite (**9a**) and Jasper Burwright (**10a**) - her brothers-in-law, friendly with Millipy (**10b**), wistfully friendly towards the sisters Burwright (**3d, 9e, 10c-g**)*

11b **Thadric Burwright** is Celine's son and he studies at the MU school where he is a day boy. He helps out in the Black Bird in the evenings; not the least part of that help is the fact that he knows how to improve the taste of the beer, thereby ensuring the pub's popularity (in the AD&D game this will be by means of a **flavour** cantrip).

11c **B D Aye** is a crow and is the familiar of Porsena Mays (**9d**). Known to the regulars as 'BD' he hops around the tap-room amusing the customers with his squawking and cocking his head on one side. Customers have been heard to remark: "You know, if I didn't know better, I'd swear he was actually listening...."

11d&e **Manuel** and **Basil** are the two devoted helpers. Both are F4/F4 hp 30/37 and have swords and clubs in the kitchen. They were drinking in the ale-house when Peridot — friend to both — lost his life. They took an oath on the spot to stay and protect his defenceless widow. Both of them are well-liked locally and they are particularly friendly with Samuel Evening (**9h**) the cook at the MU school.

11f **'Lord' Morvan deGlay** is actually NM/F0 although he purports to be Fr8/Fr8. He is a regular at the Black Bird and can be relied upon for tales from far and wide (always coloured to glorify himself). He actually has visited the Court of the Ten Thousand Ravens and entered the Punctilio, though what he really did there is anyone's guess. A useful source of information, even if some of it is unreliable.

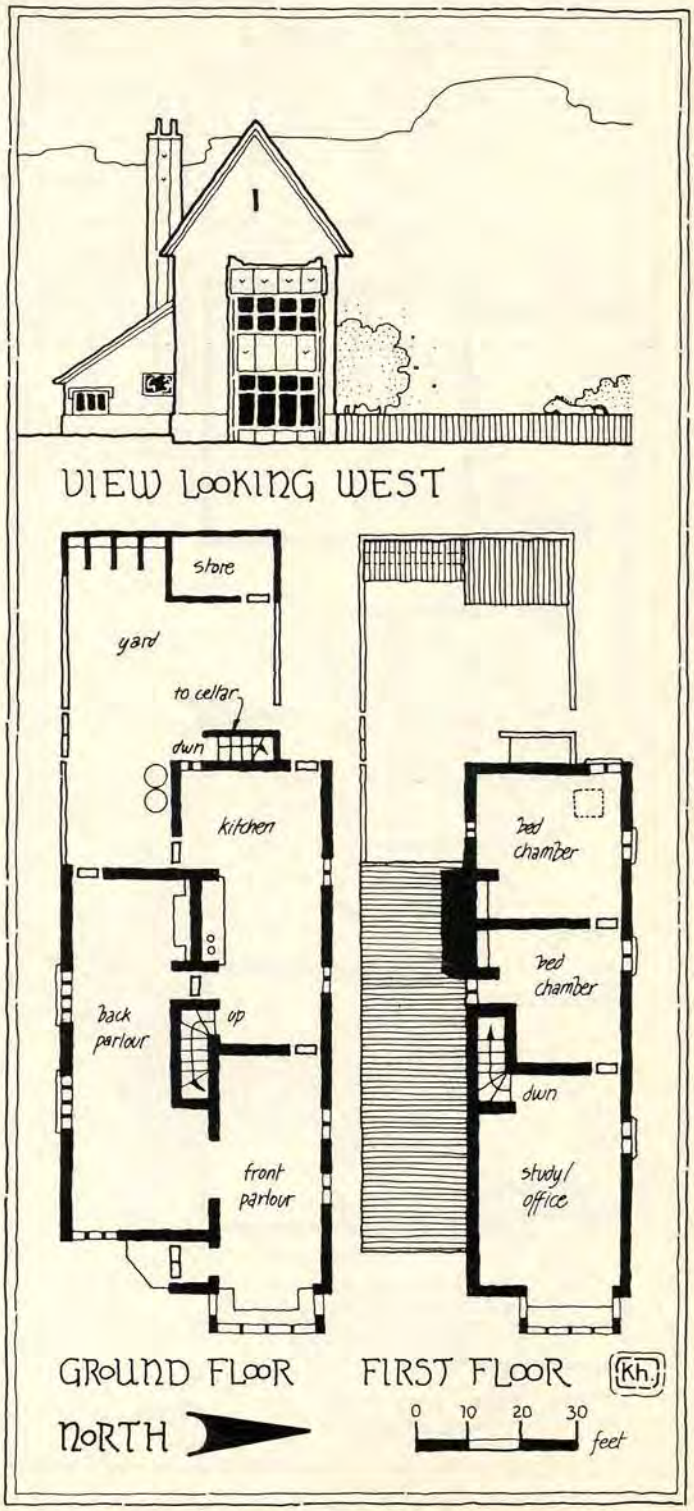
11g **Stike Nobro Tchips** is a halfling (½3/Th3 hp 18/12) who makes the astonishing claim that he has "been to the other side of the world". He says he got there "through some very deep caves" (wink-wink). Naturally, no-one believes this ludicrous story as it is common knowledge that if anyone did go to other side of the world they would fall off. Stike can be relied upon for endless rumours and hair-raising tales.

11h **Onne Parsite** is an old woman who can be found in the Black Bird (**11**) most evenings. She is known locally as a fortune-teller; they call her 'Mother' to her face and 'Old Mother Fear' behind her back. Although she appears unkempt and ragged, she is Fr10/Fr10 hp25/35 and her real name (which she keeps absolutely secret, along with her past) is Lady Miralex Fantona Hepsibah Gaunt, Duchess of Faler, Avenger Errant of Ordiniff, Bearer of the Pink Globe and Honour Par Sight-of-All. She has fallen far from grace and lives impoverished and forgotten in a mean cottage off the Wynd. Her fortune-telling powers are mostly imagined, but she has a sharp eye which allows her to make astonishingly accurate observations about those she speaks to. The DM can use her to frighten or warn the party, always taking care to enhance her air of mystery.

11i A very occasional visitor (2% of the time) is **Feyr Johannus**, a journeying cleric (C2/C2; hp 9/9) who spends the rest of his life journeying the County of Cerwyn, beyond the gates of the City. He is the best source of information locally about affairs beyond the City Walls.

11j **Silly Jarry** is the ale-house muggins. He cleans, fetches and carries, and always with a happy, vacant smile. The regulars tease him, but Celine (**11a**) protects him as keenly as if she were his mother. He wanders in and out of the ale-house, sometimes disappearing for days, and can be found anywhere from the Docks to Westmeet, helping out whenever asked. He sleeps with the pigs and chickens at the next-door MU school. He appears so idiotic and harmless that he blends completely into the background, which suits him rather well for he is F14/A13, hp 70/66 and a member of the Knights Ocular.

11k **Gervaise 'Dragonrider' Loftgringe** is F2/F2 hp12/16 and thrills all who care to listen with his tale of how he flew on the back of a dragon. The essence of the story is quite true, as Gervaise was once captured by a Wizard and flown away to his lair on a dragon. He escaped weeks later by simply walking out of the front door after he had been forgotten. Gervaise's tales rarely tell the whole truth, the Dragonride story invariably omits the bit about the Wizard and, when he relates his amazing escape, he always forgets the bit about how he walked free through the front door.



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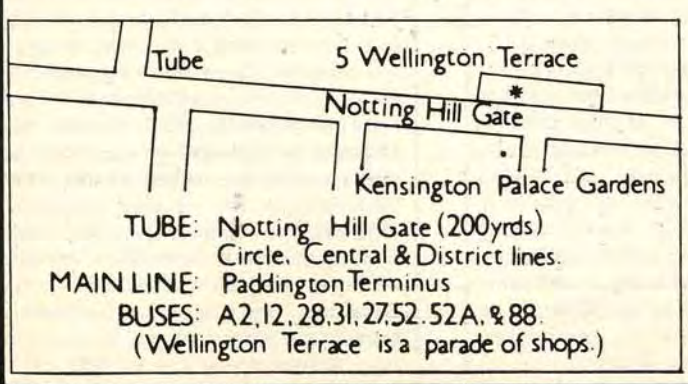

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ILLUMINATIONS

Casting The Runes

The Chaosium. Heard of them have you? I should hope you have, since they produced **Runequest**, a game which has had a greater effect on the development of RPGs than any other since the D&D game first appeared. 'Ah yes,' says the faithful reader of **Illuminations** (I know he exists because he wrote me a letter), 'but RQ has been sold to Avalon Hill, so Chaosium have nothing left to sell, right?'

Wrong. Chaosium actually produce five other RPGs, one of which is a best seller, printed in the States and in Britain; namely **Call of Cthulhu**. The others are **Stormbringer**, based on the Elric books by Michael Moorcock; **Superworld**, a superhero game, **Elfquest**, based on an American series of 'graphic adventure books' (comics to thee an' me); and **Ringworld**, another 'based on' game, this time inspired by Larry Niven's books. Or, as Chaosium's cover blurb for the game says, in two sentences that make up in hyperbole what they lack in crispness: 'Player character explorers seek solutions to the awesome mysteries of Larry Niven's immense monument to science and technology. Technology dominates everything and scientists have awesome tools to aid their investigations.' What makes you think Chaosium are based in California?

An interesting feature of Chaosium's RPGs is that the rules for all of them share a common base. This is a system called **Basic Role-Playing**. Thus, once a game has been mastered, a player will have a working knowledge of the fundementals of the other four. This is a sensible idea; who wants to learn a new set of rules from scratch when they could be playing? However, just in case you were tempted to give the Chaosium top marks for common sense, you should be aware that their next release, due out in the autumn of this year, is *not* based on Basic Role-Playing. It is called **Pendragon**, and concerns Arthurian knights. It is described as the 'perfect' game for beginners.

Other new and upcoming Chaosium work consists of supplements for existing games. There is a **Ringworld Companion** which contains extra hardware, beings and two scenarios — this should be available by now. Also due for summer release is **Return of the Elochians**, a book of three scenarios for **Superworld**, which requires the players to defend the Earth (again!) from extra-terrestial invaders. There are two Cthulhu scenario books to look out for in the autumn: **Masks of Nyarlathotep** is a 'campaign pack' of worldwide scope, containing several adventures which can be played in any order; and **Trail of Tsathoggua** has two campaign-type scenarios from the author of **The Fungi From Yuggoth** book.

From the Deeps of America

The first adventure pack for the revised **Chivalry & Sorcery** game is now in the shops. I haven't seen one yet, but I believe it is a campaign setting called **The Dragonlords**, and is one of three FGU products just released. The others are the ungrammatical **From the Deeps of Space**, a **V&V** adventure, and the unusual **PSI World**. This uses a similar system to the impressive **Aftermath** game. FGU seem to be following the same path as Chaosium in this respect, since a number of their games share similar mechanics.

Further into the future, FGU will have another V&V adventure, **Battle Above the Earth**. V&V is their best selling game in the USA, so they churn out endless numbers of scenarios for it. Over here, **Bushido** is their most popular title, but so far they have managed to publish just one scenario for that! **Ninja-Shadows Over Nippon** has been promised for a couple of years, but the designer hasn't got around to finishing it, so British aficionados will have to whistle for scenario sustenance. Not good enough, you colonials, you can only push us so far. If we don't get Bushido supplements soon, we'll have to nip over and burn Washington again.

Ruinous Runes

Avalon Hill have announced the price of **Runequest 3**. There will be a **Player's Box** (nothing to do with cricket) which contains 'everything needed to play'. Price $20. Then there is a **Gamesmaster's Box**. This is an expansion of the Player's material and is required for anyone running a game. Price $25. So to actually have a game, both sets are required. If you're feeling weak at the prospect of the combined price, fear not. There is a **De Luxe Box** which comprises the contents of the other two at the reduced price of $38. Phew. Hang on though, when you convert $38 into real money, particularly at a time when real money is at its lowest ever compared to the Yankee greenback, you are talking about nearly 30 quid! Adding on freight, customs and VAT, you could be asked for £40 in exchange for a copy of **Runequest**. I think I'm speechless.

Prices & Perils

Two letters from Games Workshop (plus a heap of goodies which we will be reviewing soon) have arrived this month. First off, our apologies for three incorrect prices in the reviews in #17. **Caverns of the Dead** and **Battlebikes** are £4.95 each, and the **007 GM Pack** is £7.95.

Then we got a Press Release to announce **Embassy Siege**, a joyous celebration of the triumph of the SAS, and a sequel to **Raid on Iran**. Quote: '**Imagine** the thrill of landing your SAS from helicopters .... gliding silently downwards to unleash leaden death on the infidels inside.' The 180 counters are supposed to include a dead policewoman chit. We're working on the assumption that this is a wacky spoof, and not a real game — but who knows? The race must surely be on to bring out **Macdonalds Restaurant Massacre** in time for Xmas....

Transatlantic Tales

The summer has been a feast as far as new goodies from TSR goes: UK2, UK3, B6, GB5, DL1, BH5, XL1, SFKH1, X Solo, and various play aids for the **GAMMA WORLD®** and **STAR FRONTIERS®** games have all appeared, and some of them are pretty good (well, the British ones anyway!). The big release for the autumn must be the **Companion Set**, which ought to be here in about a month or so.

Two other items have arrived in the office in the meantime. The first **Conan** module, CB1 **Conan Unchained** looks very interesting, and very true to the spirit of Howard's hero. Interestingly, he is portrayed as a Fighter, *not* a Barbarian. Draw your own conclusions from that. The other item is a play-aid for the **D&D®** game, **Dragon Tiles**, cardboard, stand-up walls, characters and dungeon furniture, aimed at younger players.

Ice Cool

Iron Crown Enterprises have published their **Middle Earth Role-Playing** rules — readers may have seen some of their earlier Middle Earth items. If so, they will know the high standard of production that ICE have achieved; MERP is in the same tradition. A recent letter from ICE shows that they intend to take the European market seriously from now on, so you might like to know more about them. I think it's fair to say that many people were surprised to hear that ICE had obtained the Middle Earth game rights. It is a juicy plum after all, which it had been assumed would fall to a company such as TSR or Avalon Hill. ICE had no real track record, but they were sufficiently impressive to convince the Tolkien Estate licensers. They have certainly made the most of their preferment. MERP is very well produced, and convincingly captures much of the atmosphere of Tolkien's creation. It is, in a way, quite a complex rulebook, with more charts and tables than any two SPI monster games. ICE reckon it to be particularly suitable for beginners — I couldn't agree with that, but it is an excellent piece of work and should appeal to all those people who have put up with the D&D and Runequest games, when what they really wanted was to play **Lord of the Rings**.

Home Front

News from a couple of native companies. Torchlight Products are now making their Dungeon pieces with integral walls. This does away with the necessity of glueing them together and makes them more robust. Torchlight are also starting to box their pieces, which will provide useful protection in transit.

Beast Enterprises tell me that issue 4 of **Tortured Souls** is late, but that it should be out in time for **Dragonmeet** (whatever that is). Beast are now acting as distributors for Paul Vernon's **Starstone** module which has been increased from £2.95 to £3.95.

Ticketa-Koo

A press release from Steve Jackson Games let us know about three new miss-'em-if-you-dare products. **Car Wars** fans will want **Expansion Set 5**; 48 new vehicle chits and the arenas of Dumbarton Slalom and the Buffalo (NY) Municipal Coliseum. If that's too pacific, try **Shockwave!**, a supplement for **Ogre** and **GEV**; superheavy tanks and cruise missiles. But real connoisseurs of good taste will want **Globbo**, where the children of Ticketa-Koo try to survive the attentions of their nanny. Best rules I've read for months — look out for a review in the next month or so.

DISPEL CONFUSION

Role-playing games have complex rules that are open to interpretation, which can cause problems when two players interpret them differently. ***Dispel Confusion*** *is a column intended to help by providing answers to rules questions.*

At present we mainly answer questions about TSR games. While the answers we give are not fully 'official', we do have contact with the designers and a good deal of playing and refereeing experience.

An answer column needs questions, so send yours to:
Dispel Confusion, TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE.
If you don't want to wait for your question to appear in the magazine, please enclose an SSAE.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® and ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® games

Q. How can a magic user or an illusionist write down the details of a spell that doesn't have verbal components — for example, the **shadow door** spell? *(Advanced)*

A. In a case like this the spell would not be written down in terms of words spoken and the components used, but in some form of notation that tells the magic user how the hands should be moved — like the notation for recording dance movements.

We suggest that in a magic user's spell book — the 'recipe book' for spells — the details are recorded as the necessary components, correct order of use, the words to be spoken, or, in a case like the **shadow door**, the notation of the gestures to be made. With a scroll, the information is recorded in a similar way, and is 'blanked' just the same when the spell is read, regardless of whether the reader was making the relevant gestures or not.

Q. Could a cleric use a dagger to cut a rope or something similar and not break the class restrictions/religious beliefs? *(Basic/Advanced)*

A. The restrictions on a cleric using edged weapons apply only in combat. No penalty should be applied for using a knife for everyday, non-violent functions. Of course, if a good cleric were to cut a rope from which someone were dangling, he or she should have good reasons for doing so.....

Q. The **Players Handbook** and the **Dungeon Masters Guide** give two different rates for character healing. Which is correct? *(Advanced)*

A. This is one of those points in the rules where the publication date defines what is right or wrong. As a general principle, a later edition/printing date on a particular rule book overrules an earlier rule book if there is any difference. Therefore, the healing rates given on p82 of the **DMG** (in the section *Recovery of Hit Points*) are the correct ones.

STAR FRONTIERS® game

Q. To what extent can a Dralasite use its racial ability of elasticity in order to peer over objects, pass through small holes or form facial features? The Expanded Rules give a rough idea of the number of limbs that they can grow, but do not help otherwise.

A. There is no definitive set of rules on what a Dralasite can and cannot do by using its elasticity, but some guidelines do exist.

The minimum diameter for a Dralasite's body is that of a limb — 10cm. A Dralasite could thin its entire body to a cylinder of that thickness, but certainly no thinner or its internal organs would be crushed. Therefore, it could not flatten itself enough to limbo under doors, for example.

A Dralasite's skin is not self-adhering — it cannot bend a finger around to the wrist and attach it like a piece of *Plasticine*. Although it can wrap itself around an air pocket (so it can float), the air is held in by muscular contraction — not absorbed into the creature's body. The Dralasite could conceal small objects this way too, by wrapping around them and holding them inside.

Assume that any function a Human or Yazirian could perform (such as leaning round a corner or peering over a barricade) can be performed by a Dralasite with a small stretch. Greater feats of elasticity can be performed within the stated limits, but they take time. The referee can determine how much time a given feat should take by using the growth or withdrawal of a limb as a guideline.

Finally, Dralasites cannot use their elasticity to avoid falling damage or to withdraw limbs so that they will not be sprained or broken in a fall. It takes ten minutes to withdraw a single limb, so a falling Dralasite would hit the ground long before any limbs could be withdrawn for protection, and its body would take the damage in any case. If limbs are injured in a fall, the Dralasite can subsequently spend time withdrawing and regrowing the injured limbs, which will remove the penalties but not heal any of the damage.

Mike Brunton, Graeme Morris, Jim Bambra & Phil Gallagher

A HOUSE OF STRAW AND PAPER

by Colin Greenland

Based on the characters in the book Daybreak on a Different Mountain, published this month by Unwin & Allen.

Once he had put the city behind him, he could breathe again. He rode north. By the next afternoon he had passed out of the grey fens and come to fertile uplands. A lightning-shattered tree stuck out of the hedge like a clean bone. Beneath it a broken harrow mouldered under moss. Lupio stopped at the first house he saw and begged a pitcher of water. He struck a bargain with the farmer. For the rest of the day he carted turnips in from the yard and set them in racks to dry, and that night he slept in the barn. In the morning she gave him apples and cheese wrapped up in a big flat pan-loaf, and a corner of honeycomb because he had made her laugh. She remembered when she had been younger, and had had a fancy for men like him. Instead she gave him the honeycomb, and advice.

'You'll never make Dincot in a day, and that's that. I don't care who her sire was,' she said, glancing scornfully at his mare. The mare, sensing her disapproval, shook its head nervously. They bred better men than horses in Thryn, then, thought the farmer. 'Take your time and put up at the House Hospitable.'

He rode away. He passed a forgotten scarecrow, its sacking smock flapping in rags. There was no one else on the road but a family of tinkers who stared dumbfoundedly from their wagon as Lupio went by, singing at the top of his voice. Lupio's voice was not as good as he thought it was.

He stopped singing when he came in sight of the House Hospitable. It possessed the land with its own silence. Lupio stared at it for a while, puzzling out some of the outbuildings: servants' quarters, stables, workshops, a bath-house and another he couldn't identify, with large windows. They all formed a rough square with the hall. It was impressive, for this region: a veritable castle.

He sat in the gatehouse while a boy brought the Seneschal. He waited a long time. The porter was doing figurework in a ledger, and would not talk to him. Lupio read some of what he was writing. They seemed to have a different way of reckoning dates here. He cast his eyes around the shelves of dull folios, wondering when the hospitality would start. People going across the courtyard stopped to stare in at him briefly.

The Seneschal was an elderly man, very upright, very thin. He wore a complicated costume of layered capes and a number of finger rings, with the largest of which he now traced a sign rapidly in the air. Lupio took it for some kind of ritual greeting.

'It isn't often we have visitors from Thryn.'

'It's only recently anyone has had visitors from Thryn,' Lupio assured him. The Seneschal looked even more gratified.

Lupio began to beg food and a bed, but the Seneschal waved him aside. 'Many people stay here,' he said. 'Some for a night, some to work for a while. All add something to our store of knowledge.'

'And what do you do with all this knowledge you've stored?'

The Seneschal beckoned him into the courtyard. They stood on a circular pavement, incised with figures in the pattern of a giant sundial. Wooden cloisters surrounded them, sheltering equipment and piled crates.

'What you see,' said the Seneschal, 'is a farm of wisdom.' His gestures were measured, discursive. 'Our hall is our nursery, where we tend the seed-beds of debate; and our library is the granary where the fruits are garnered and worked.' He indicated the building with large windows.

A young man in a plain robe was passing. He paused to protest at the Seneschal's allegory. 'Are we then thieves, Master Seneschal, to make our bread from other men's corn?'

'No, Pippin, for our ears are our own!' said the Seneschal, and shook the young man by the shoulder, with a smile of approval. 'Master Lupio is from the city of Thryn,' he told him.

Lupio was distracted by two girls peering from a doorway. One had obviously brought her friend to look at him, and they ran away again at once. The square was suddenly swept by a stiff, cold breeze.

The Seneschal led Lupio back into the gatehouse and presented him with a sheaf of thick hard paper and a horn-nib pen. The papers were already half-full of writing: questions for him to answer. His name, his age, where he came from, where he was going. This fee of knowledge was going to be a large one, Lupio realised; but at least it wouldn't leave his purse any lighter. On a sudden whim, where his occupation was asked, he wrote down, 'Scholar'.

'From the city, and a scholar!' The Seneschal was delighted. 'Our brothers will be honoured to converse with you.'

Lupio stood and picked up his bag. 'I'll be glad to tell you what news I know,' he said, 'and what history I can remember. But I must warn you: in Thryn it is now our custom to refrain from debate for three years' travel, to observe the ways of the world we have neglected so long.'

The Seneschal regarded him, without words, but not without suspicion, then bid him welcome. 'Dine with us in Hall,' he said. 'You'll hear the bell.'

A young girl showed Lupio his room, a narrow cell with a plank bed, a tiny desk and a stool. She fetched him a palliasse and a bundle of rush-lights. Through the narrow window he could see dim fields and a wood where the leaves were turning brown. Someone was burning holly.

In the hall the scholars, men of all ages mostly dressed in robes like Pippin's, sat apart from the families of servants. Lupio ate at the High Table, with the Seneschal and other men who called each other Master when they asked for the bread. Servants bustled behind them, fetching and carrying. Lupio looked at the dark gowns and grey heads nodding about him. He felt that his blue jacket and yellow hair made him much the brightest figure in the room, a visitor from another world; but he was amused how easily the pompous manners came back to him.

'Indeed, Master Librarian,' he said, 'the renown of the House Hospitable came to Thryn, even in the long years when nothing else came or went there.' He took another sip of an excellent wine. 'Knowledge,' he said, 'knows no walls.'

The Librarian was a yellow man who

seemed to be made out of parchment himself, his face written all over with lines. 'And may I enquire,' he said, 'what your particular study is?'

'Mankind,' said Lupio gravely, as a waitress poured broth into his bowl, 'and womankind too, of course.' He smiled up at her.

She gasped and coloured, taking an involuntary step backwards and colliding with another servant. Broth spattered the Seneschal to the sound of breaking crockery.

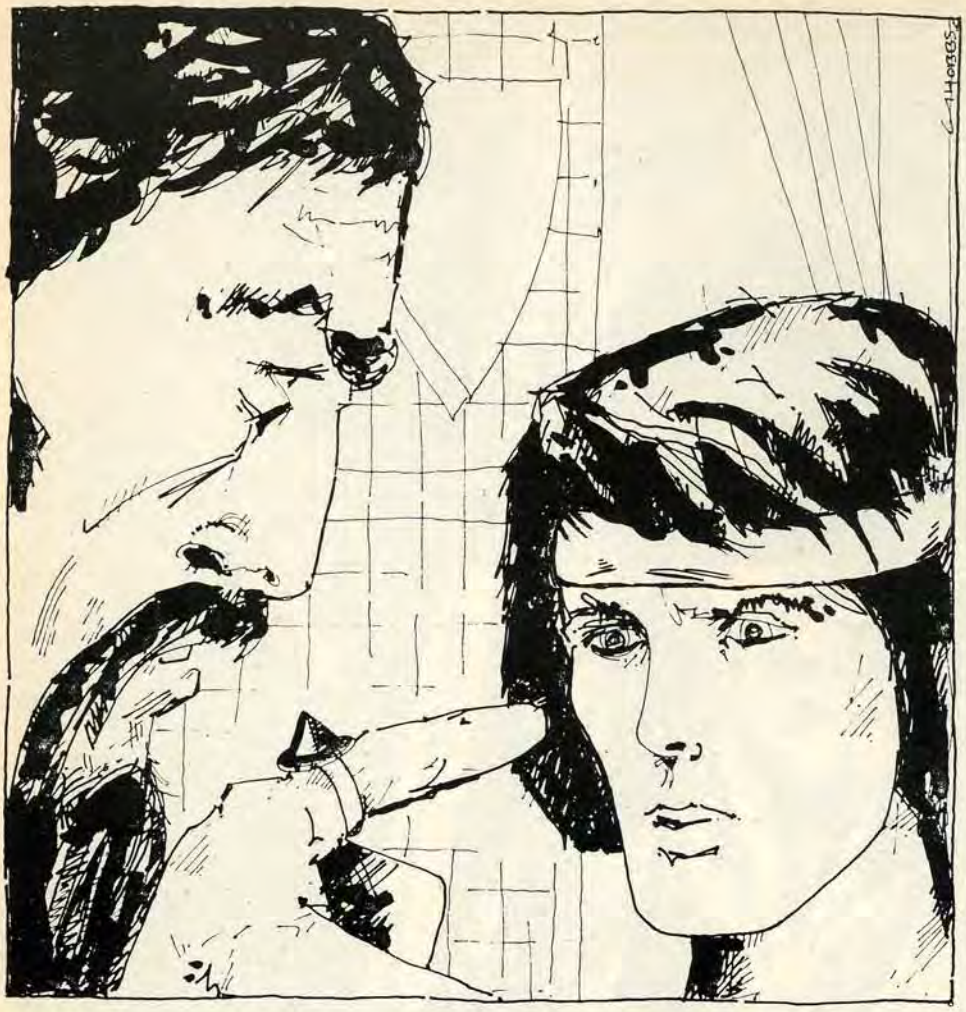
'Clumsy woman!' He sprang up with remarkable spryness and rounded on the unfortunate waitress while people fussed over him with cloths.

'It must be difficult to study creatures who find your attention so alarming, Master Lupio,' said the Librarian mildly.

'The consequences are not always so devastating, Master Librarian,' Lupio replied, breaking bread. 'But great patience is always necessary.'

'This is not the first time,' said the Seneschal, resuming his seat and his dignity, 'that I have had cause to regret the presence of womankind in the House altogether.'

Lupio thought the old fool was making far too much of a simple mishap. 'Tell me, Master Seneschal, how do you receive female scholars?'



To his astonishment half the table began to laugh aloud.

'Female *scholars!*'

'Thryn keeps its wit sharp, I see.'

'An excellent jest, Master Lupio. Come, some more wine.'

Lupio lay on his bed, hands clasped behind his head, listening until all the footsteps and the creaking of doors and floorboards had settled down. Then he rose and slipped from his room. The night was clear. A moon two days off full silvered the courtyards as he moved through the shadows of the cloisters towards the servants' house. After dinner he had lingered in talk until he saw her leave the kitchen, then watched her go to this room. He hoped it was hers. He hoped it was hers but no one else's. Light showed under the door, but no sound came from inside. He lifted the latch and went in.

And startled her a second time. She pulled the quilt up to her neck, hiding something under it with the other hand.

'What do you want?'

'Sh,' said Lupio, closing the door. 'It's all right.' He stood by the bed with his hands open to show he meant no harm. 'I just want to talk to you.'

'What for?'

Her voice was high; she was very frightened. And very attractive, Lupio decided, studying her face. He said, 'I haven't met you before, I'm sure I haven't. I wish I had.' She didn't smile. 'But you recognised me, didn't you?'

'No.'

'Then why do I frighten you so much?'

'You're in my room,' she said.

Disingenuously he said, 'I thought this was the House Hospitable.'

Unexpectedly, she did smile at that, and almost relaxed a little.

'There are limits,' she said.

Then he noticed her accent and understood.

'You're from Thryn, aren't you?'

She sighed, and nodded.

'That's why I startled you.'

'I ran away. Don't make me go back.'

'I wouldn't think of it,' he assured her. 'My name's Lupio. What's yours?'

'Jennaver.'

'May I sit down?'

'All right.' She drew up her feet and let him sit on the end of her bed. 'Aigu Lupio, are you really a scholar?'

'No.'

'I didn't think so.'

'Why not?'

'You don't look like a scholar.'

'What do I look like?'

Jennaver answered him without hesitating. 'You look like a man who's quite accustomed to making himself comfortable in young women's bedrooms.'

Lupio laughed. 'And telling lies to rich old men. Were you in service, in Thryn?'

She nodded. 'I worked for Aigu Tintillan. Do you know him?' He shook his head. 'I thought he'd sent you to bring me back. Daft.'

'Was he a bad master?' he asked.

'Not so bad. But I wanted to see the world. I ran away. I climbed over the Wall.'

'And now you're in service here.' He leaned back, looking at her. 'You should have told them you were a scholar too. That would have got them going.'

'No!' she said. 'I got into trouble that way. They saw me with a book.' Lupio frowned, so she explained. 'They don't believe women can read. When they saw me reading the other servants put the word on me for a witch. I had to see the Master Seneschal. It was a book with pictures in, so I pretended I was just looking at the pictures. I said I was only making out I could read, for a joke. He beat me.'

Lupio put out a hand to cover hers where it lay on the quilt. She didn't pull away.

'Jennaver, I'm not here to make you go home. But listen: you should go back to Thryn. It's all changed there now.'

She looked doubtful. 'What's the point? Serve Master Seneschal, serve Aigu Tintillan.'

'No, no you don't understand. There aren't any more servants. There isn't even a Wall any more; we pulled it down.'

It was obvious she didn't believe him. He moved his hand and touched the square bulge under the covers. 'What's this?'

'Guess.'

'A book.'

She drew down the quilt to show him. It was a manuscript, bound in horn: Palyntarchus's *Dissertation on the Sorts & Conditions of Men*.

Lupio grimaced, taking it from her. 'Is this as heavy on the eye as it is on the hand?'

'I'm working at it,' Jennaver said confidently.

'If they knew you had this, what?'

'Don't know.'

'Perhaps they'd kick you out. That would be all right.'

'There's two more. I stole them from the library. They're very important books. I'll show you.' She jumped out of bed in her shift and went to the corner, to rummage in a basket of mending.

Callini, *Against Servitude*, and Josip Triskau, *Freedom and Will*.

'I can understand nearly all of it,' Jennaver told him.

Lupio moved closer to her and put his hand on her knee. 'I'm going tomorrow. Come with me.'

She shook her head and lay back against her pillow. 'I don't know.'

'You won't ever have to come back here,' he said, 'whatever happens.'

She put an arm under her head. 'Ask me again,' she offered, 'before you go.'

He wriggled along the bed to lie beside her. 'All right,' he said. 'What shall we do until then?'

The dawn bell woke them. Jennaver rushed to get dressed, but he took her arm. 'I'm going to get my things and saddle up. Then I'll be back for you.'

'But the Master Kitchener —'

'You don't have to do anything for anybody,' he told her. 'I'll be back in ten minutes.'

Lupio's breath steamed in the shining air as he carried his pack to the stable. His mare was eating already. He thanked the stablehand and led the horse outside. Servants were already astir; the day was well begun. A cock was crowing relentlessly. A fine haze hung wet upon the wood. Lupio called a boy to hold the mare and went back to Jennaver's room, prepared for an argument. She wasn't there. A man and a woman were searching her room, turning over her meagre belongings.

'Where's Jennaver?'

They exchanged a glance when they saw him, and the woman looked as if she were about to speak, but the man waved her back. He addressed Lupio levelly. 'She's with the Seneschal.'

Lupio stormed into the Seneschal's chamber. The old man looked up sharply and signed the officer to take Jennaver into the next room. She wouldn't meet Lupio's eyes. Her face was pale.

'What's going on?'

The Seneschal's voice was dry and quiet, and implacable. 'That woman was seen admitting you to her cell last night. We do not tolerate impropriety here. She will be punished.'

'That's not even true! I burst in on her!'

'As now you have on me.'

Lupio set his feet firmly in the thick carpet. 'My manners are bad at this hour in the morning, as my patience is weak. You don't own her body.'

'We do.'

'Well, then, I'm the one you want, I'm the criminal.' Lupio was angry. 'I've violated your property, and now I'm taking it away from you.'

As he moved towards the connecting door the Seneschal rose, a cloaked guardian blocking his path. 'Your attempt to protect her does you little credit, Master Lupio. The woman has already been denounced for witchcraft. Does she now have you in thrall?'

For an instant Lupio saw a deluded, peevish, pathetic old man; but his rage was stronger than his pity, and he began to draw his sword. At that moment there was a knock. The couple Lupio had seen in Jennaver's room were at the open door, holding out *Against Servitude, Freedom and Will*, and *The Sorts & Conditions of Men*. 'Master Seneschal, we found these.'

The old man pushed past Lupio with a cry. 'Our books!' He took them and brandished them at Lupio triumphantly. 'She burns for this.'

Lupio didn't know what he meant. The Seneschal leaned out of the door and called. Two bulky men in leather appeared and removed Lupio's sword-belt. Then the officer brought Jennaver out and hustled her away. The accusing couple followed. Nobody looked at Lupio. He started forward but was firmly elbowed back by his guards.

'Take Master Lupio back to his cell. See that he has everything he requires,' the Seneschal commanded. 'Don't let him injure himself.'

Lupio lay on his pallet ignoring them, looking up at the ceiling. Infirm sunbeams came and went. The sounds of people at work in the yard seemed remote.

She burns for this.

Suddenly he was cold with fear.

The moment one of the guards looked away Lupio threw himself at the other, who turned slightly as he rose and smashed Lupio between the eyes with his elbow.

Lupio woke up, back on the bed, his face stiff with dried blood. He tried to remember where he was. Suddenly he had a vicious headache. He groaned. The men looked down at him. He saw a huge impassive face bend closer. 'You fell off the bed,' it said.

Lupio's head was full of bells and clangour. Or was it real?

He saw the guards glance at each other, caught unawares; then the door flew open.

'Fire!' yelled a voice. 'Hurry, you fools!'

The men left him and went bundling out. Lupio sat up. There *were* bells ringing. He got to his feet, one hand on the wall. He smelled smoke. He buckled on his sword, and made his way into the courtyard. It was all quite confusing. There was a bonfire built at the front of the yard, smouldering nicely. Next to it lay a cart with a broken axle, and a man with a broken leg, kindling strewn around. Burning bits blew merrily hither and thither. The Seneschal stood clutching the three books to his chest and gesturing frantically. The library roof was on fire.

Atop the bonfire, Jennaver stood tied to a post, shrieking. While Lupio hesitated, still stunned, his erstwhile guards were struggling with the library door. A frantic pounding came from inside, then a shower of sparks and a sharp crash. It was all happening impossibly fast.

Lupio looked at the panicking crowd; the stables; the gate. He ran to the fire and kicked aside the flaming wood. He leapt onto the collapsing pile, grabbed the stake and clung on with one hand, scrambling for a footing and struggling to draw his sword.

It wasn't as sharp as it might have been. People were shouting; Jennaver was gasping. Lupio hacked at her ropes, swearing unimaginatively.

Suddenly someone was beside him, elbowing him out of the way.

'Mind yourself!' The woman raised a kitchen knife. She chopped — once, twice, three times — and Jennaver toppled. He caught her.

Lupio took one swift glance at the crowds behind him. The Seneschal was yelling at them, unable to desert the blazing library. People were opening the stable gates. They were yelling at them too.

Lupio went for the stable, rushing Jennaver inside and onto horseback. Heads down, they burst from the door. He dragged the halter rope over and the mare wheeled out of the yard at a dangerous lick. Jennaver was sobbing. Lupio, in a sort of frenzied daze, dug in his knees and kept on going.

They fled from the House Hospitable, down the hill and into the wide, brown world.

The first thing Jennaver said was:

'They'll be all right now.'

'What?' said Lupio.

Jennaver said, 'It's raining.'

A white sky emptied itself. The grass shone.

They hid in a covert.

'Are you all right?' he asked.

She looked round at him, preoccupied.

'The library burnt down,' she said. She was shivering.

'Yes,' said Lupio. 'It went up so fast.' He laughed, dismissively. 'Do you know what the Seneschal said? He said it was a granary. A granary of wisdom. But it was only a house of straw and paper.'

The mare stirred.

'All those books,' said Jennaver.

Then Lupio remembered. 'All except yours.'

'Mine?'

'Palyntortoise, and his pals.'

She laughed a little. 'Palyntarchus, stupid. Callini — say Callini.'

He was feeling light-headed. 'Callini,' he said.

'And Triskau.'

'Shh!'

'Just because you can't say it!'

'Triskau,' he whispered, and she laughed at him again.

'What about them?'

'They're the only ones left. The Seneschal was hugging them while the rest were going up in smoke.'

'No!'

'Yes. One day they'll venerate your memory as the saint whose miracle saved their three sacred books from the fire.'

They ought to be getting on, he thought. But it was good resting here, hugging Jennaver, looking out across the wet landscape. It was utterly deserted.

After a while Jennaver said, 'There was another book I had they didn't find. Not one of theirs, a pedlar gave it me. Full of rude jests, and drawings. I kept it hid in the hayloft.'

Lupio began to laugh. 'Philosophy and pornography! What more could they need?'

Jennaver said, 'I'd like to read some more books, some day.'

Lupio thought of all the books that lay waiting within her, books of brightly coloured words, that would never be written. 'There are better things than books,' he said.

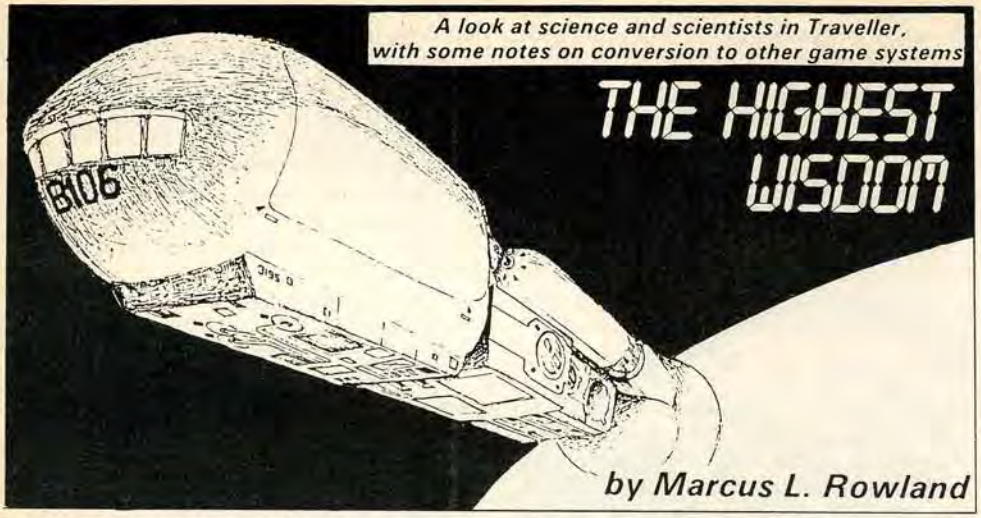
'Such as?' she asked, teasing.

'Let's see what we can find.'

Together they rode from the covert and across the fields. In the chill of evening they came to Dincot, and the road to the sea.

Colin Greenland

Colin Greenland's first novel, ***Daybreak on a Different Mountain****, is published this month by Allen & Unwin. It tells how the Walls of Thryn came to be demolished, and what part Lupio played in that historic event.*


A look at science and scientists in Traveller, with some notes on conversion to other game systems
THE HIGHEST WISDOM
by Marcus L. Rowland

Traveller tends to minimise the role of scientists in adventures. The basic rules don't include a scientist career, and the optional system in **Traveller Supplement 4** gives fewer scientific qualifications than service in the Navy. It isn't hard to see why this occurs.

Traveller was designed by wargamers. In consequence, the use of abstract skills and knowledge received comparatively little attention in the original game; the majority of Traveller scenarios involve characters in immediate practical matters — fighting, trading, and running spacecraft. Few adventures have included scientists, none as player characters, and the typical Traveller NPC scientist is either a crook, mad, or misguided. A rare exception is Lorain Massandi, an archaeologist and heroine of **The Legend of the Sky Raiders** (FASA). It's notable that her only scientific qualification is Computer skill, and that she has no real use for this skill in the course of her adventure.

If scientists are to play a more important part in adventures, it's necessary to start by improving their skills to a level that allows comparison with those available through the use of **Mercenary, High Guard**, and **Scouts** (Traveller books 4-6).

Another route to improved skills is university education, as used in High Guard. The system which follows is based on a university career.

Modified Scientist Career System

1: Recruitment: Change recruitment roll to 8+, modifiers +1 if INTEL 9+, +2 if EDUC 10+. This is now a university entry roll.

2: First term (University education):

a: Roll 7+ (DM +2 if INTEL 8+) to pass the first year exams. If this roll is failed the character has aged to 19 and must try another service. No skills are acquired.

b: Roll D6+1 for the number of skills earned in the term. These skills must be rolled from the Science Skills list below. There are three tables, roll one die for the table used in the first roll: 1-2 Physical sciences 3-4 Life sciences 5-6 Other sciences

c: Roll one die on the appropriate table. The first skill is received at Skill level 2, and uses 2 of the skills rolled.

d: Additional skills may be rolled from any of the three science tables. In all rolls after the first there is an optional modifier of +/- 1 if EDUC 12+ or INTEL 11+. This modifier may be used to alter the result to gain a desired skill.

e: Any roll increasing a skill above level 3 gives Instruction skill instead.

f: Roll 10+ (DM +1 if EDUC 10+) to receive honours. Honours give an extra Science Skill, +1 SOC, and +1 EDUC. DO NOT roll for normal first-term skills.

This procedure is more generous than that in High Guard, but later terms do not give as many chances to earn skills as service in the Navy under High Guard rules.

3: Second and subsequent terms: The character MUST serve at least one additional term after education. In this and later terms the character receives normal skills, as indicated in Traveller Supplement 4, and on a roll of 10+ (DM +1 if EDUC 9+, +2 INTEL 10+) receives one Science Skill from the tables below. The rules on maximum skill levels above should be followed.

4: Mustering Out: Roll as in supplement 4.

Scientific Skill

Physical Sciences	Life Sciences	Other Sciences
1: Astronomy	1: Biochemistry	1: Anthroplogy
2: Astrophysics	2: Biophysics	2: Archaeology
3: Chemistry	3: Botany	3: Linguistics
4: Physics	4: Ecology	4: Psychohistory
5: Planetography	5: Medical	5: Xenology
6: Planetology	6: Zoology	6: Psychology

EXPLANATION of SCIENTIFIC SKILLS:

Anthropology: The study of the behaviour and mores of the character's own species. to Xenology, below.

Archaeology: This skill gives a modifier on the chances of finding, identifying, and understanding ancient artifacts.

Astronomy: The study of the stars and planets. Astronomy skill may be used as a +1 modifier on Navigation skill, if applicable, and to increase the chance of understanding the movements of stars and planets. It is also useful in dealing with artificial and manipulated astronomical objects (Ringworlds, Orbital Towers, Kempler Rosettes, etc).

Astrophysics: This skill is used to increase the chance of correctly understanding the behaviour of stars. For example, a star might be in an unstable pre-nova condition. Astrophysics helps estimate the time left to the explosion.

Biochemistry: The study of chemical processes in living organisms. May be used as a modifier in some medical problems (eg, preparation of an antidote to poison, synthesis of combat drug), or in research or analysis work.

Biophysics: The study of physical processes in living organisms. May be used to modify attempts to adjust alien equipment, in medical situations, etc.

Botany: The study of plants. May be used as a modifier on attempts to identify plants, discover their life cycles, etc, and in agriculture.

Chemistry: The study of chemical processes and techniques. May be used to modify attempts to produce or analyse chemicals (eg, to refine fuel with jury-rigged equipment).

Ecology: The study of the relationships between different living organisms, and their niches in the environment. May be used as a modifier in attempts to identify harmful or useful species, eradicate pests, etc.

Linguistics: The study of languages, their evolution, and their structure. May be used as a modifier in attempts to translate alien languages and understand human dialects.

Medical: See Book 1

Physics: The study of the physical laws of nature. Physics skill may be a modifier (at the referees discretion) when attempting to understand and use unfamiliar equipment or improvise equipment.

Note: Physics skill may decrease the chance of success in encounters with Psionics, magic (in campaigns allowing magic) and highly advanced technology.

Planetography: The study of physical characteristics, climate, and natural cycles of worlds. Geography, the study of Terra, is a localised example of Planetography.

Planetology: The study of the minerals and composition of worlds. Geology is a localised example of Planetology.

Psychohistory: The analysis of mass psychology and behaviour, and the extrapolation of future behaviour from present trends. The skill should be used as a modifier in the prediction of political

trends, fashions, customs etc.
Note: Psychohistorical experimentation — the use of these techniques to manipulate populations — is banned by Imperial law, and player characters will not know the methods used in this process. See **Library Data N-Z**.
Psychology: The study of human mental processes. This skill can be used as a modifier in most negotiations, in the treatment of the insane, and as a substitute for Interrogation skill (books 4-5). In the latter case it is used with a -1 DM.
Note: Alien characters trained in Psychology are taught to deal with their own species, not Humaniti.
Xenology: The study of aliens, including their psychology, habits, religions, etc. Each level of Xenology skill is a +1 modifier on dealing with all other species including Humaniti.
Zoology: The study of animals. May be used as a modifier on attempts to identify animals, deduce their habits and behaviour, etc.

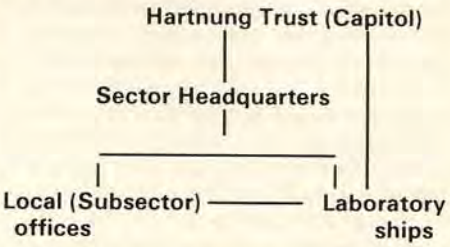
Use of Scientific Skills

The skills described in this article may be used in much the same way as any other Traveller Skill. Routine work involving no new principles (eg, analysis of a fuel sample to check its purity) will succeed on a roll of 8+. Each complicating factor makes the roll harder. Work requiring a minor conceptual breakthrough (eg, realising that an alien art object is meant to be felt rather than seen) requires a of 10+ for success. Discovering an entirely new application of existing scientific knowledge (eg, inventing a wholly new electronic device) requires a roll of 12+. Developing an entirely new scientific theory (eg, an alternative method for FTL travel) requires a roll of 14+. Characters will not automatically make world-shattering discoveries on a roll of 14+ of course, since the scientific evidence must be present, and looked for. However, routine work might produce an odd result and give characters a clue that something strange is happening, leading to further research. Similarly, a character looking for a scientific breakthrough might fail but still develop something useful as a by-product, such as a new computer program or a cheaper way of refining a particular chemical. The character must be making a conscious attempt to find such spin-off products in order to succeed.

The Hartnung Trust

The Hartnung Trust is a typical Civilian scientific institute of Imperium, specialising in "pure" research. It's well known that the Trust are good employers. They pay well, provide the best equipment, allow personnel to take credit for any discoveries they make, and let their teams work with the minimum of red tape. A small fleet of laboratory ships spearhead this work, and vessels are often encountered in the stranger corners of inhabited space. They are backed by ground-based research teams, and grants from the Imperial system governments. Usually the command structure shown below is followed, with the main trust headquaters on Capitol relaying orders to Sector headquaters, which in turn relay them to the laboratory ships and to local offices. Some ships report directly to the Capitol headquarters, bypassing the sector headquarters, but most pass on their findings to whichever local or regional headquarters is closest.

Organisation of the Hartnung Trust:

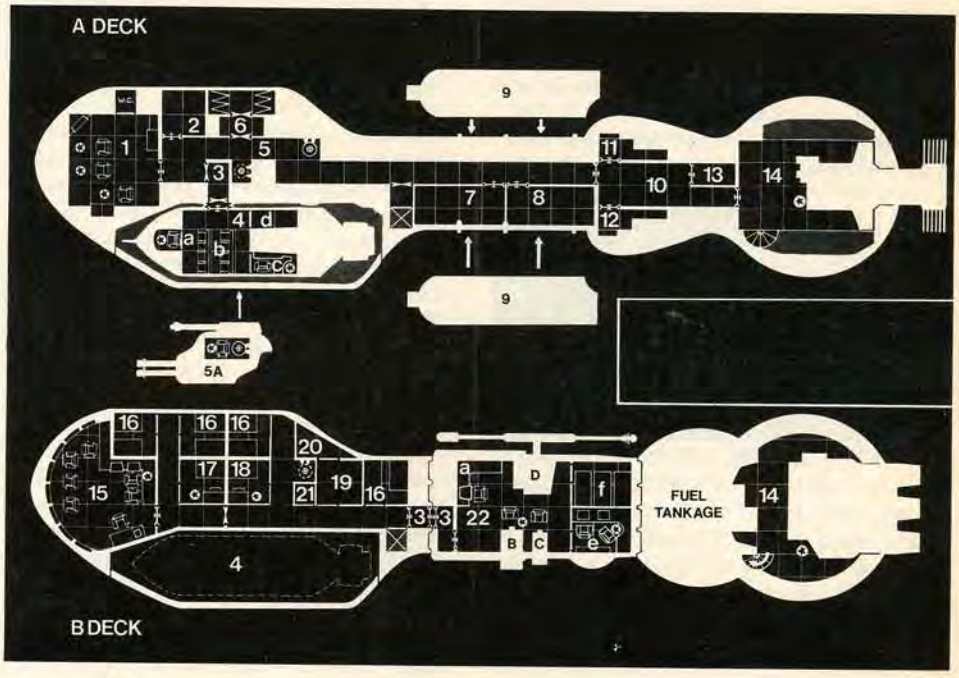


Most of the vessels used are members of the Calypso class, Terran-built starships with a demountable laboratory pod.

Calypso Class Starships
(Book 2 design with book 5 components)

Using a 400 ton hull, these vessels are designed as a mobile base for a scientific team, supporting their activities by supplying accommodation, computer power, and workshop and laboratory facilities. They are fitted with Jump drive-D, Manoeuvre drive-D, and Power plant-D, giving performance of Jump-2 and 2g acceleration. There is fuel tankage for 200 tons, sufficient for the power plant and two J-2 jumps or prolonged manoeuvering. Fuel scoops and purifiers are fitted, and the hull is streamlined. A model 4 computer is used for scientific applications as well as ship handling. Six staterooms accommodate five spacecrew and five scientists. A triple turret holds twin pulse lasers (mining type) and a sandcaster. There is one unarmed ships boat. The ship costs MCr 164.91, excluding the price of the external laboratory module. Construction time is 11 months.

The ship has a general purpose laboratory aboard, and fittings for an external 60-ton modular laboratory. These laboratories are available in several configurations; a version built for astrophysics research is illustrated in the ship plans. This design carries a modular 2b computer (a), a 1-Metre optical telescope (b), spectroscope (c), mass detector (d), radiation and other sensors (e), and a small sleeping cabin (f). The spectroscope can be used for long-range analysis of minerals if they are first vaporised by the ships lasers. To reduce vibration the laboratory can be separated from the ship on a 150-metre umbilical tether. This laboratory costs MCr 37.5, including instruments and specialised scientific software. The cheapest laboratory costs MCr 8.08, with a model 1 computer but no other fittings. The ship has mountings for two 25-ton drop fuel tanks, costing Cr70,000 each. These tanks reduce the ship to Jump-1, 1g until dropped, but let the ship travel a total of 5 parsecs before refuelling is needed.



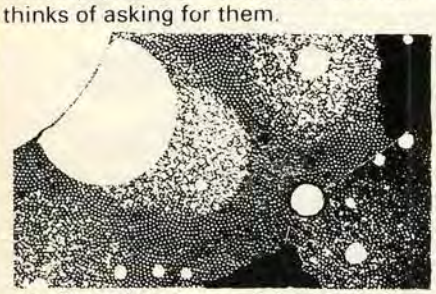
Key to Ship Plans

1: Bridge; 2: Captains stateroom; 3: Airlocks; 4: Ships boat in bay (a: pilot; b: passengers; c: engineer; d: galley); 5: Hatch to turret 5a 6: Main airlock and 10-metre docking adaptor (retracted) 7, 8: Storerooms 9: External fuel tankage (2 by 25 ton drop tanks) 10: Workshop (Equipped for laboratory construction, engineering, and electronics work) 11, 12: Fuel scoops/purifiers 13: Chemical store 14: Engineering compartment: Jump drive in upper section, Power plant/Manoeuvre drives in lower section. There is fuel tankage forward of the lower section, above and below the drives, and under the hull. 15: Laboratory (general purpose) and observation deck 16: Staterooms (double) 17: Senior Scientists' stateroom/office 18: Sick bay 19: Galley 20: Food Store 21: Fresher 22: Laboratory module

The latest ship of the Calypso class is the Hartnung Challenger, currently fitting out in Terra docks. The Trust recruits new personnel whenever a ship is launched, to prevent a build-up of old scientists with inflexible minds. The following scenarios assume that characters are scientists or ships crew employed by the Trust to serve on the Challenger. They are presented in the style of Traveller Supplement 6, **76 Patrons**. Players should develop their own theories and explanations of the events described. Such theories may easily be more interesting than those included below, and the referee should feel free to alter events accordingly.

1: Halo Hunt

Required skills: General Scientific, Spacecrew.
Required equipment: None
Players' Information: Shortly before the Challenger is to be launched, a scoutship entering the Terra system detects radio signals from a source in the cometary halo, several thousand AU from the sun. The signals are regular but do not correspond to any known code. The scoutship hasn't the range to investigate, so the report is passed on to the Navy. As a courtesy the local commander has sent a copy of the report to the Subsector office of the Trust.
Referee's Information: The Navy wish to investigate, but won't have a ship available for six weeks. The Challenger will be ready in three, and is capable of jumping to the signals source, investigating, and jumping back. Only one laboratory module is available, the astrophysics unit shown in the ship plans. The Navy will provide all supplies for the expedition, on condition that a Navy representative (Lieutenant) is allowed to participate. If this condition is refused the Navy will withdraw all cooperation and delay the Challenger indefinitely. Naval supplies available on Terra include some instrument probes with 12g drives, a wide variety of sensors, and remote controls. They weigh 1.5 tons. These probes are available if the team thinks of asking for them.



1: The signals are faint emissions from a developing protostar, forming from a thick dust cloud in the halo. The density of dust in this region will cause hull pitting, and can puncture suits in D6 hours. If the team decides to take the ship to the heart of the phenomenon its drives may (roll 11+) trigger the ignition of the star, in an explosion equivalent to a 10-Megaton bomb.

2-3: There is a small black hole in this location, absorbing dust and releasing energy as electromagnetic radiation. Such holes can be manipulated electrostatically, and are important to space-based industries, but this one is too far from Terra for economical recovery. The team should be encouraged to investigate (from a suitable distance), and on a 9+ (DMs + Astrophysics, + Engineering, + Number of weeks spent investigating) will learn a new industrial use for holes. Such information will earn the Trust D6 MCr0.5 a year royalties, with the team receiving a 1% share.

4: An ancient, unmanned probe has been struck by a micrometeorite, reactivating its transmitter. The probe is a fabulously valuable archaeological prize, one of the ancient Terran Pioneer series. Safe recovery will resolve many minor historical puzzles. Anyone with Archaeology skill active in its recovery will gain +1 SOC.

5-6: The signals emanate from a sentient dust cloud, normally living in interstellar space, which is visiting the cometary halo to gather more dust for reproduction. It doesn't intend to go any nearer the sun, and poses no real threat to the solar system unless provoked. The cloud is approximately 10,000 Km in diameter, mass 2300 megatons, and will react to any hostile approach. It can control its structure magnetically and electrostatically, to produce laser or energy beams, jam tight beam signals (which cause minor discomfort), or expel dust and gas as kiloton-mass projectiles. These processes release a lot of waste energy, including the radio signals detected by the scout. Its mental processes are unlike those of Humaniti. Capable of thinking thousands of times faster than humans, it has an approximate Intelligence level of 24, Education 27. It is moderately curious. To make contact with the cloud 14+ (+ Xenology, Commo, Computer, Linguistics). On a roll of 10+ (same modifiers) something useful will be learned, otherwise the cloud will dismiss the team as being unintelligent, or semi-intelligent at best. The clouds' mental processes will not respond to psionics, and are essentially electronic. Once contact is made it may decide to take control of the ship's computer, which will give it information at a reasonably fast rate.
Note: The Naval Lieutenant is the incompetent younger son of an Earl, assigned to the mission as an excuse to keep him away from base. He will always give bad advice or fumble any jobs he is given, and should be played as an accident-prone upper-class twit.

2: Alignment Day

Required skills: Astronomy, Astrophysics, Planetology.
Required equipment: Vacc Suits (Provided by Hartnung Trust)
Players' Information: The Challenger is assigned to visit an uninhabited binary system off the normal trade routes. In two months time there will be a freak alignment of planets around both stars, so that the two stars and twelve planets will lie on a straight line. The team are to set up seisometers and other instruments on some of the planets, and monitor events throughout the system before, during, and after the alignment. The astrophysics module and assorted instruments packages are provided.
Referee's Information: None of the planets are habitable, and there is no gas giant, but there is a Scout Service supply cache on one of the less hostile worlds. The ship can refuel (once) and take on supplies for a prolonged stay in the system.

1-2: A film company's ship will arrive in the system a week after the Challenger, intending to record the alignment for a forthcoming video epic. There is only enough fuel in the cache for one ship to refuel and jump out of the system. As time passes it will become clear that both stars are fairly unstable, and are likely to flare or even go Nova under the stress of the alignment. The team and the film crew must come to an arrangement, leaving one ship behind. The film ship is an older liner, with 4 crew and 12 passengers. It is much less valuable than the Challenger but has spare accommodation.

3: As 1-2, but the film ship arrives a week before the Challenger and refuels immediately.

4: As 3, but the film crew are aliens requiring an exotic atmosphere. They will do their best to cooperate.

5-6: As 4, but the aliens are on a religious pilgrimage and don't intend to leave until they have witnessed the alignment. If this involves their death it is regrettable, but unavoidable. On a roll of 8+ (+ Xenology) they will agree to let the Challenger have the fuel, provided the team are prepared to arrange for a salvage tug to rescue them or retrieve their bodies after the alignment.

Note: During the alignment solar flares from one of the stars will reach out to the planet, or it will go Nova, and any ships or personnel left behind will be destroyed.

3: Seeds of Discovery

Required skills: Biology, Vacc.
Required equipment: None.

Players' Information: One of the Trust's offices correlating botanical records has discovered a curious fact. There are virtually identical species of vacuum plant on moons in nine systems across the subsector, all too similar for parallel evolution to be a feasible explanation. Challenger is to visit each system, and collect samples to determine their origin and how they have spread. A Biology laboratory module has been fitted.

Referees Information: The team will probably guess that the plants have been spread by spacecraft, but this theory is wrong.

1-2: The plants are actually a single intelligent species, linked telepathically to form a group mind. If enough plants cooperate they can teleport a few seedlings across interstellar space and colonise a new world. The plants are aware of humans but slow to react. If the team members start to destroy plants (eg, by taking a whole plant or plants instead of a few leaves and seeds) the plants will retaliate, firing seeds by a normal vacuum dispersal method (see **Supplement 3, Animal Encounters**) or teleporting stones into the teams equipment. Friendly contact may be possible if the team does something to help the plants, or if a team member is an Esper.

3-4: This species has developed tiny spores (resembling microscopic thistledown) which can ride the solar wind. Spore pods resembling seeds are expelled normally to give an initial boost, but shatter in flight to release the spores. An occasional spore reaches another system. The team will be able to

prove this hypothesis by finding spores floating in space.

5-6: As 3-4, but the spores will grow on any nutritious material. Vacuum suit material contains some of the chemicals they need. Anyone struck by an unexploded spore pod will be attacked by the spores it contains, with suit integrity lost in 2D6 minutes.

Note: All of the systems are colonised. Roll 2D6, if the result is less than the system law level, the local authorities have declared the plants to be: 1-3: a protected species; 4-6: a pest. In either case the team will need permits to take specimens.

Use With Other Games

While much of the information in this article is wholly specific to **Traveller**, a game which had no 'pure' scientific skills, the ship and scenarios will hopefully be useable in any SF campaign.

In Traveller terms, the Hartnung Challenger has long range (including the ability to refuel by diving through the atmosphere of gas giants), but it is not very agile. It is larger than most civilian ships, smaller than the majority of military craft. The challenger is lightly armed, and could not be used in an offensive role. The lasers fitted are of an industrial design, and are less efficient than military models. The sandcaster is a device that sprays out a cloud of laser-scattering crystals and gas, reducing the likelihood and severity of a hit. It can be compared to an industrial sand-blasting unit or a smokescreen. The ship's computer serves several remote terminals (including radar and other sensor systems) but has no true intelligence, the lab computer is even more limited and bears comparison to a 20th century micro computer. The launch is a simple landing craft with no special features. The hull is built for gas scooping but not for landing, except in a docking cradle in a low-gravity world.

For games which generally use much larger starships, such as **Star Trek** or **Space Opera**, the Challenger might be an auxiliary vessel carried by a mother ship. It should be noted that Traveller does not allow the use of any Faster-Than-Light signal, other than the use of starships as couriers. The majority of die rolls in the game are made on 2D6.

All the scenarios offer three or more possible outcomes, with the referee picking one or rolling a die to choose randomly. The first scenario is relatively easy to convert, since almost all the terms used are common to all SF games. One skill is mentioned; Commo is the ability to use communications gear.

The scenario uses no special terms apart from the phrase 'exotic atmosphere', meaning an unusual and usually unbreathable gas mixture. Chlorine, methane, and superheated steam are examples of exotic atmospheres.

The third scenario mentions vacuum plants, which may not occur in some SF games. These are highly evolved vegetable species which recycle their waste products, and can live on rock without taking in gas from an external atmosphere. They usually spread their seeds explosively, and a fired seed can do as much damage as a bullet. See **The Other Side of the Sky** by Arthur C Clarke for a description of this type of plant.

Sources: The following books and stories suggested themes for this article, and may be of interest:

Gregory Benford	**Timescape**
Benford/Eklund	**If the Stars Are Gods...**
Arthur C Clarke	**Earthlight**
Arthur C Clarke	**The Other Side of the Sky**
Jacques-Yves Cousteau	**The *Calypso* books and films**
Fred Hoyle	**The Black Cloud**
Larry Niven	**Neutron Star (collection)**
Stephen Tall	**The Stardust Voyages**
A D van Vogt	**The Voyage of the Space Beagle**

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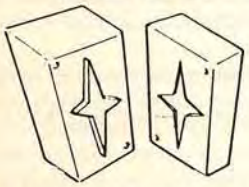
BRISTOL 17/19 Penn Street. BS1 3AW. 0272 20259
CARDIFF Northgate House, Kingsway, CF1 4AD. 0222 397645
CROYDON 135A North End, CR0 1TN. 01-688 1585
KINGSTON 30/32 Eden Street, KT1 1EP. 01-549 5464
LEEDS 16/18 King Charles Street, LS1 6LT. 0532 456611
LIVERPOOL 36/37 Dawson Way, St. John's Centre, L1 1LJ. 051 709 0799
MANCHESTER 4/6 Brown Street, off Market St. M2 1EE. 061 834 0279
NEWCASTLE 43/47 Pilgrim Street, NE1 6QE. 0632 324161
NOTTINGHAM 3 Mount Street, NG1 6JW. 0602 411693
ROMFORD 7/11 High Street, RM1 1JU. 0708 24283
SHEFFIELD 38 Pinstone Street, S1 2HN. 0742 77864
SOUTHAMPTON 114 East Street, SO1 1HD. 0703 24843
WATFORD 70 The Parade, High Street, WD1 2AW. 0923 37563
*MAIL ORDERS TO SOUTHGATE

FLEMING RESINS



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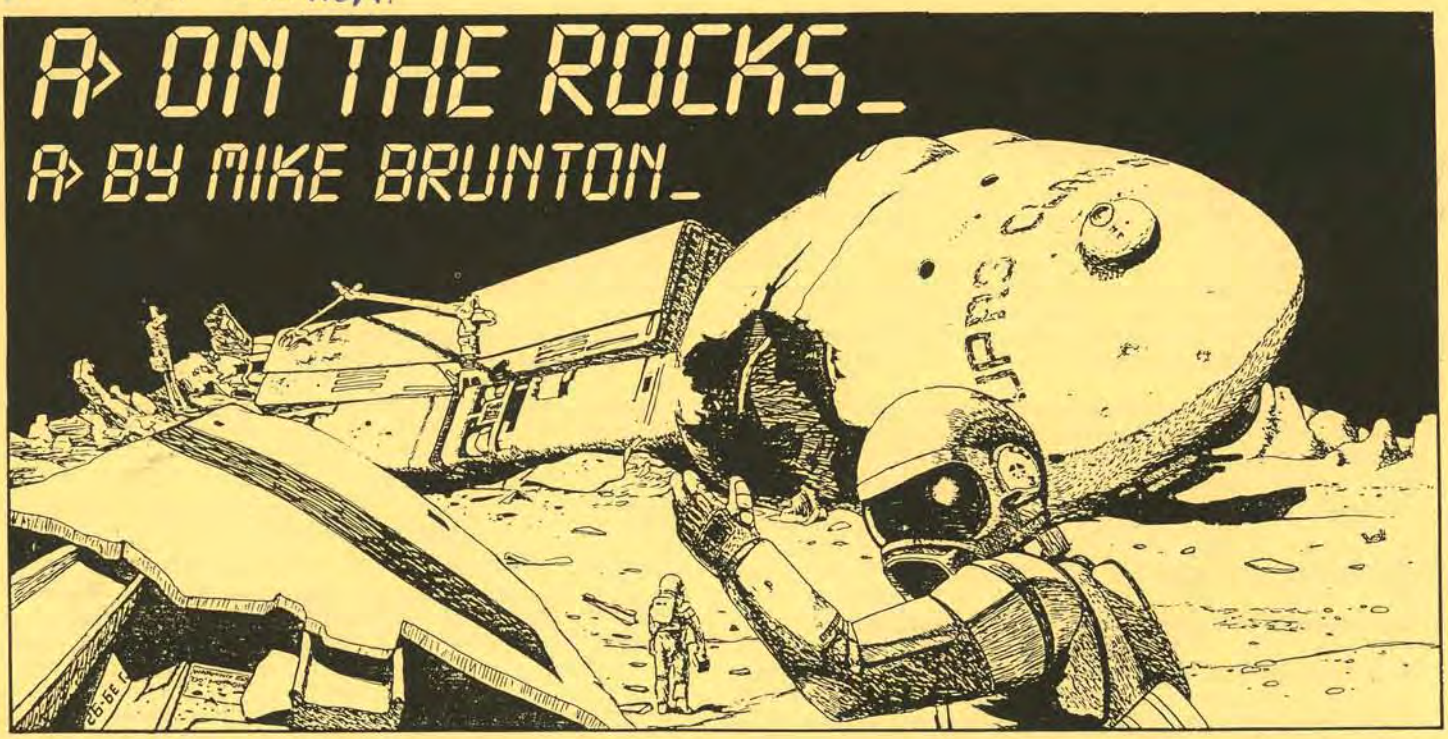
IM 18 Star Frontiers.

A> ON THE ROCKS_

A> BY MIKE BRUNTON_



INTRODUCTION

On the Rocks is an adventure for the **STAR FRONTIERS®** game, and the referee will need copies of the **Alpha Dawn** and **Knight Hawks** rules to run it. The referee should also be familiar with the East Indiaman Class Freighter on p27-30 of this issue of **IMAGINE™** magazine.

If you intend running a character in this adventure, please stop reading here.

The mini-module is designed for groups of 3-5 player characters, who will need a good variety of skills from the Alpha Dawn rules. They will find it difficult to succeed without Technician, Computer and Military skills. Spaceship skills could prove useful, but are not essential to success — unless the players are very careless of the lives of Non-Player Characters (NPCs) during the course of the adventure.

Background

The East Indiaman UPRS (UP Registered Ship) Clan Chattan spent the last three years on the fairly profitable, but undramatic, Truane-Dixon's Star haulage run. The cargoes never made vast profits, but the bank payments and crew wages were always paid on time. One month ago, the last voyage of the Clan Chattan began as had all the others, with Jasmine Cumae, the owner, ship's master and pilot, filing her flight plans at the Pale, Truane starport control. The Clan Chattan accelerated away from Truane and jumped into the Void. The ship did not arrive at Laco, Dixon's Star. The Clan Chattan had been late in the past, so nobody worried. However, after a week without any evidence of the ship's fate, the Laco Development Corporation (LDC), as the owners of the ship's cargo, declared the Clan Chattan missing, blaming pirate action and/or the crew of the Clan Chattan for the loss.

Two days later, the robot prospector ship Romero-4 quietly made its first rendezvous with the asteroid Plutarch, Dixon's Star. Plutarch's orbit had changed slightly, and Romero-4 found the cause — the Clan Chattan, by a billion-to-one chance, had collided with the asteroid. Maintaining radio silence for commercial security reasons, Romero-4 completed its survey, and then turned for home.

Auric Mining & Construction (AuriCon), the owners of Romero-4, did not want the crash of the Clan Chattan to become public knowledge. Ownership of Plutarch was at stake. Under UPF law, anyone who had survived the crash (however briefly) could claim ownership, and Plutarch was important to the company — millions of tonnes of orbital construction material in a star system without an asteroid belt. Within days, a company police scout was diverted to Plutarch and landed a small team of Regulators to establish the company's mining rights.

The Clan Chattan's fate did not stay a secret for long. By chance, Nathaniel Cumae — Jasmine's half cousin — worked for AuriCon and saw the Plutarch scanning reports. Risking his future (and his life), he anonymously sent copies to the LDC factor at Pale, Truane. The Clan Chattan and its cargo had been found. Recovery was another matter....

One week ago, another East Indiaman, the Paltsa Ryby, arrived at Pale, Truane. The LDC factor immediately approached the ship's master, Captain Glaz Ptitsy (a Vrusk), and offered him Cr30,000 and 5% of the cargo's value for its recovery, but only if this was done quickly. Glaz Ptitsy accepted on the spot, despite the fact that the crew of the Paltsa Ryby consisted of two people: himself and Milo Hansen — his engineer and co-owner.

Starting the Adventure

Glaz Ptitsy (see **The Paltsa Ryby** for more details) needs a salvage crew. He will advertise for crew members through the starport databank — and actively seek employees in the various bars and spacer flophouses on the starport space station. Unfortunately for him, AuriCon know what he has been hired to do, and the company has persuaded potential crewbeings to take up other offers of employment.

By the time Glaz Ptitsy approaches the adventurers, they should have heard of him — and his lack of success in hiring people. He will offer the group standard rates, depending upon their skill levels. If necessary he will add a further clause to the contract: 1% of the value of any salvaged cargo, to be divided amongst the group. This is a potentially vast sum, but he is now desperate — time is running out.

The Paltsa Ryby

The Paltsa Ryby is a rather battered, standard ion-driven East Indiaman — see the class description for further details. It carries sufficient armour, space suits, rocket packs and fuel to outfit the adventurers for work on Plutarch. The arms locker contains ten laser pistols, five laser rifles, a single heavy laser that needs repairing (Milo Hansen has never found the time), and a single doze grenade. The arms locker is also well stocked with power packs and clips.

The Paltsa Ryby has only two permanent crew: Captain Glaz Ptitsy, who owns 70% of the vessel, and co-owner and engineer, Milo Hansen. The two are good friends — despite the fact that they argue all the time.

Paltsa Ryby Crew

Name	STR/STA	DEX/RS	INT/LOG	PER/LDR	IM	RW*	M*	Comp
Glaz	50/60	40/60	75/50	50/70	6	80	25	30
Skills: Technician 6, Computer 6, Beam Weapons 6, Pilot 3, Astrogation 3, Gunnery (Energy Weapons) 2 (Vrusk Male)								
Milo	65/90	20/15	50/75	10/05	2	30	43	
Skills: Technician 5, Robotics 4, Engineering 6, Beam Weapons 2, Melee Weapons 1. (Human Male)								

* RW — The chance to hit with best Ranged Weapon.
* M — The chance to hit with best melee weapon.

Captain Glaz Ptitsy is a competent business being — he will offer the adventurers the minimum wages he thinks he can get away with. On the other hand, he will not abandon them should a situation deteriorate. Glaz takes care of Milo, keeping him out of jail and as sober as possible — and will not hear a word said against him.

Glaz knows that AuriCon has an interest in Plutarch, and understands the UPF space law on ownership. He also has a cargo manifest for the Clan Chattan in his possession. In addition to the surviving cargo listed below, the Clan Chattan was also carrying computers (valued at Cr120,000) and a second transposant pod with 2000 occupied storage class berths (indentured labour valued at Cr7 million). The cargo manifest does not give the surviving cargo, only what was carried when the Clan Chattan left Pale, Truane.

Milo Hansen crawled inside a whiskey bottle years ago — and never came out. His low intellectual and social abilities reflect this, while his melee weapons skill is based solely on his proficiency with broken bottles and chair legs. Drunk or sober, Milo is fully capable of carrying out his duties, and he is devoted to Glaz, his only real friend.

GENERAL COURSE OF PLAY

Pale Station, Truane & the Flight to Plutarch

Once the adventurers have agreed to work for Glaz Ptitsy, he will give them two hours to finish any other business they have, collect their possessions, and report to the Paltsa Ryby in the station docks. AuriCon will learn of Glaz Ptitsy's doings through one of their agents in the Port Authority and will send a team of Regulators to intercept the adventurers.

The Regulators — identical statistics to those on Plutarch — will ambush the adventurers in one of the commercial zones attached to the docks. The referee should use the Commercial Deck Section of the station floor plans provided in the Knight Hawks game to represent this area. The Regulators, equipped with needler pistols, stunsticks and military skeinsuits, will be waiting in the Spacer Club for the adventurers to appear, and will attempt to capture them. If they succeed in doing so, the characters will wake up as part of the indentured labour force of AuriCon. The course of play from this point is up to the referee.

To avoid this, the adventurers need to reach the elevator, which will take them to the Paltsa Ryby's dock. Any NPCs on the station who witness the fight — Port Authority personnel, off-duty spacers, etc (the referee should feel free to invent bystanders) — will not interfere in what appears to be a commercial vendetta.

Once on board the Paltsa Ryby, the adventurers will be introduced to Milo Hansen. The ship will leave the dock, and head for Dixon's Star. The flight to Plutarch will take five days, during which time the referee should feel free to invent events of interest. The adventurers will be given crew status as far as the ship's security systems are concerned.

Plutarch

Plutarch is a an interstellar rogue caught in the gravity well of Dixon's Star. Deep black in colour, it is made up mostly of carbon, nitrogen and hydrogen compounds with small amounts of water ice and nickel-iron ore. Plutarch is potentially very valuable, containing many of the raw materials needed to build and maintain starships and space stations. From Plutarch's constituents, plastics can be synthesized, hydrogen for fuel and oxygen for air can be extracted; the water is valuable in itself, and the metal content is simply a bonus. While Plutarch is quite large when compared to a ship — a roughly oblong boulder some 2.5km long, 1km wide and 500m deep — its mass is very low. For game purposes assume that the gravitational pull of Plutarch is minimal, ie zero gravity conditions. The referee should note the effect that this will have during the game — eg objects (and people) will tend to float away unless tethered.

The crash site of the Clan Chattan stands out as a streak of silver-white debris against the deep black of the rest of Plutarch — a colour due to the gradual accumulation of aeons of interstellar dust.

The AuriCon Regulators

The Auric Mining & Construction Police, known as 'Regulators', are in charge of security throughout AuriCon's business empire. They also fight the company's wars. Landed on Plutarch to establish ownership, the Regulator detachment has orders to allow no-one else to land, no matter what the reason. If necessary, they will use force.

When the Paltsa Ryby arrives at Plutarch, the Regulators will make contact and tell Glaz Ptitsy to move away immediately 'or face the consequences....' However, Brett will exceed his authority and allow a landing if — and only if — Glaz Ptitsy and the adventurers agree that they have no claim to Plutarch whatsoever. Under these conditions a supervised landing will be allowed, but no help will be offered.

Brett can be bribed if offered a sum of Cr250 or more. He will allow the spare generator to be used to supply power for repairs to the Clan Chattan. He will not allow the generator to be used if he has been threatened or if any of his men have been harmed.

In point of fact, AuriCon have no right to Plutarch — it belongs to the late Jasmine Cumae. If her body is found (see **Repairs**), and Brett gets to hear of it, he will order the Paltsa Ryby to leave at once. He and his men will remove all traces of Jasmine's presence after the crash, up to, and including, setting explosive charges on the wreckage of the Clan Chattan.

The Regulators (All Human)

Name	STR/STA	DEX/RS	INT/LOG	PER/LDR	IM	RW	M
Brett	50/60	45/45	40/50	30/45	5	53	35
Reg.1-6	60/70	50/45	25/30	15/10	5	45	60

Skills:
Brett: Beam Weapons 3, Melee Weapons 1, Computer 1.
Regulators: Projectile or Beam Weapons 2, Melee Weapons 3, Medical 1 (Regulator 1 only), Demolitions 1, Technician 2 (Regulator 2 only)

The Regulators are all equipped with space suits, space suit armour, military skeinsuits, albedo screens and rocket packs. Brett is armed with a laser pistol (connected to a 50 SEU power beltpack). His squad is armed with two shotguns (see **New Equipment**), 5 laser rifles and vibroknives.

The Regulators are housed in a survival unit — basically three linked plastic domes with an airlock. The plastic is capable of taking 30 points of structural damage. The entire unit is capable of providing life support for up to 12 people for a period of 1 week, and is equipped with a simple videocom, an entertainment computer, a weapons and spacesuit storage/maintenance area, an automatic galley, and bunks for the occupants. The unit is powered by a type 2 generator (this particular unit has a spare). The Regulators have supplies for two months, as well as 100 rounds of shotgun ammunition and 2kg of Tornadium D-19. Re-charges for the laser weapons are effectively unlimited.

New Equipment

Shotguns: These weapons are often included in spaceship arms lock — their effects on spacesuits can be dramatic.

Shotgun

Projectile Weapons

	Damage	Rate	Defence	PB	Short	Med	Long
Shotgun	8/3/2/1§	1	Inertia	0-2	3-8	9-18	19-40
Sawn-off	8/2§	1	Inertia	0-2	3-4	—	—

§ Damage in d10s — the decrease occurs at each range, and is applied to all the targets within the spread of shot (2m wide at point blank and short range, 4m wide at medium and long range). A shotgun blast only causes 3 points of structural damage, but they are very dangerous weapons to use against spacesuits. A shotgun blast will cause 1d10 2cm holes in a spacesuit, each of which has a 60% chance of self-sealing. Spacesuit armour has a 55% protection rating against a shotgun blast (see **Knight Hawks Campaign Book** p28).

A standard shotgun has a mass of 4kg, costs Cr450 and takes a 5 shot clip costing Cr15. Sawn-off shotguns have a mass of 3kg (the barrel is much shorter), cost Cr600, and are either single shot models or take a three round clip (Cr10).

When a character uses a shotgun in zero gravity, he or she should make a Dexterity ability check. Failure indicates that the character has been thrown off balance by the recoil, and must spend the next turn recovering or suffer a -50 penalty on the chance of hitting a target.

The East Indiaman Class Freighter

The East Indiaman Class Medium Freighter

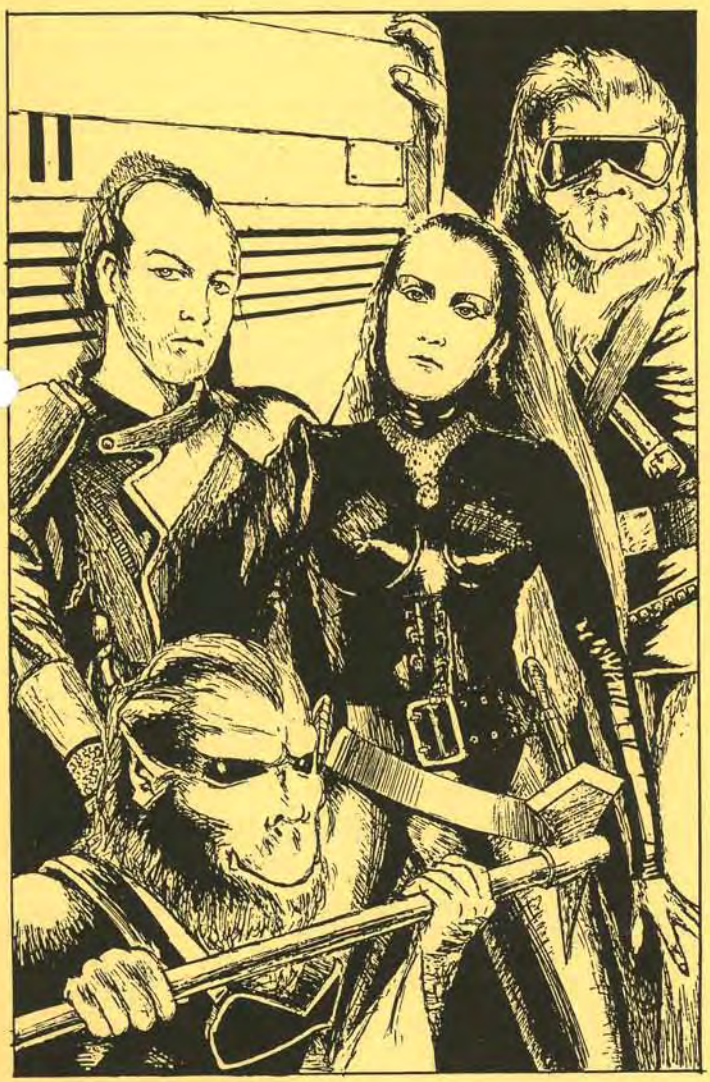
The East Indiaman Class is based on a size 10 hull. It has a beam of 39m and an overall length (including the drives) of 210m. The ship's only defensive system — a reflective hull — is provided as standard, as is a laser battery mounted in a chin turret.

East Indiamen are usually powered by three type B ion engines — these are usually de-rated military drives, or occasionally UPF-surplus drives. Launched from the airdock of Tallyman Associates (the designers) at Triad starport, a basic East Indiaman as described below costs Cr1,330,000. If built by a licensed contractor at another Class I starport the cost of the basic ship rises to Cr1,570,000.

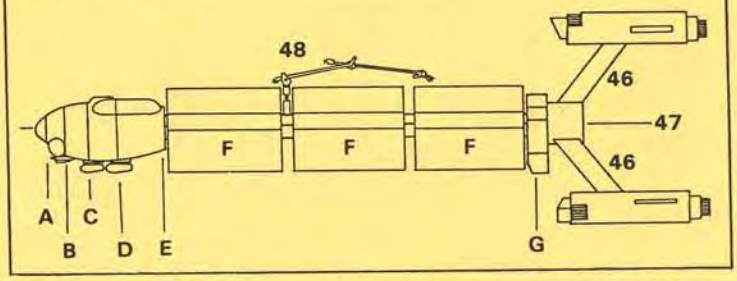
Atomic drives can be fitted in place of the ion engines. This version, including an uprated Drive program and deluxe astrogation package costs Cr2.4 million. The ship's ADF is 3 with atomic drives. All other statistics remain the same.

The deck plans, side view and description below are for a typical cargo carrying East Indiaman. As such, the ship serves as an excellent example of what is delivered to a customer by Tallyman Associates. Naturally, customers and crews rapidly alter and add to the basic specifications to make a ship more like home.

Construction standards: The hull is made of polycarbon and is capable of sustaining 200+2d100 points of structural damage at any point (portholes are made of armoured plastic, and can take the same damage). Airlock hatches can take 200+d100 points of structural damage. Internally, breaching the bulkheads requires 50+2d10 points of damage. Unless noted otherwise, compartment doors are of heavy construction (cf **Structural Points** table; **Alpha Dawn Expanded Rule Book** p25).



EAST INDIAMAN CLASS FREIGHTER::::0001100::



Security Systems: The hull is fitted with skin sensors that are tied into the Installation (Ship) Security program. A full size camera system giving coverage of the entire ship is also fitted. The resulting TV pictures may be displayed by any computer terminal on the ship. The Ship Security program also controls movement through a system of cardlocks.

Crew ID cards will open all airlock hatches and doors on the vessel, and allow use of the elevator. Access to the cabins and the Bridge is usually restricted to nominated crew members. When issued, passenger ID cards allow access to the passenger's cabin, the mess and the recreation lounge. The elevator cardlock will only allow access to decks where the user's ID card can open doors.

Although not mentioned in any Tallyman sales literature, there is an additional security system fitted. Built into both of the Life Support systems are tranquillizer devices that can be triggered from the Pilot's position on either Bridge. Anyone who is not wearing some form of protection — a space suit, an emergency suit or a gas mask — is treated as being in the burst radius of a doze grenade when either of these systems is activated. Usually only the ship's master, pilot and engineer are told of the existence of this system.

Elevator: The central lift shaft is built to the same standards as the outer hull. It carries not only the personnel elevator that runs the entire length of the ship, but much of the vessel's 'central nervous system' as well. All the fibre optic computer and intercom links and the main power and water supplies are buried within the walls of the shaft. A recessed ladder is also built into the side of the shaft for use in emergencies when the lift fails.

Cabins: All the cabins aboard an East Indiaman Freighter are similar in the fixtures and fittings provided. Each contains a bed locker or closet for each occupant, an intercom, a computer terminal (allowing access to the entertainment functions of the Communications program only), spacesuit storage facilities and an emergency suit for each occupant (see the section **New Equipment** section for further details of the emergency suit).

Crew: The minimum recommended number of crewbeings required to run an East Indiaman is four — ship's master, pilot, astrogator, and engineer. Crew members would be expected to do more than one job. A more usual complement is seven — the exact breakdown of tasks varies from ship to ship — as this is large enough to allow some crew back up and small enough to be economic.

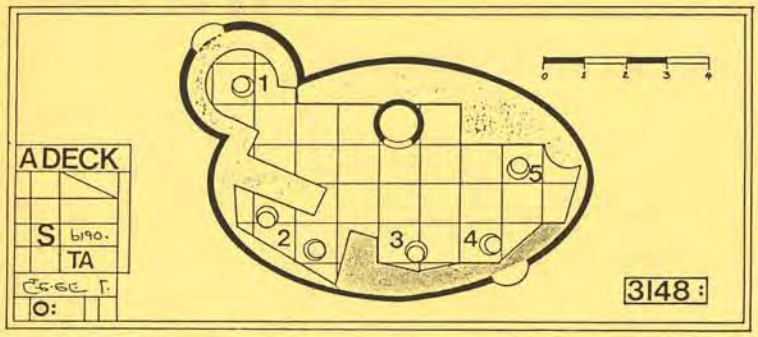
The ship's master is a designated crew member, often the pilot or the ship's owner, charged with overall management of the ship. The designated ship's master is granted a large number of user privileges on the computer — he or she is usually the only individual who can access any program from any part of the ship. UPF space regulations hold the ship's master responsible for safety and all other activities of the vessel.

Transposant Ship

Both governments and corporations have found it necessary to displace troublesome elements in the population, and the moving of these 'transposants' proved too expensive by normal commercial means.

A Transposant East Indiaman carries the nine modified cargo pods, each containing 2000 storage berths and the attendant life support equipment. Each ship can carry up to 18,000 transposant beings — political prisoners, commercial dissidents, criminals, enforced colonial volunteers, and corporate labour transportees — to wherever they are required. The UPF also has an ion-drive Transposant East Indiaman — UPFS S'sor — for relocating troops between bases.

'A' Deck: The Bridge



1. Astrogation: Only the basic astrogation equipment package is provided on an East Indiaman, as these ships are intended to fly regular, well charted routes. The computer terminal allows access only to the Astrogation, Analysis and Information Storage programs.

2. Pilot's position: All ship control functions can be performed from this one seat, as the helm and other controls — including cargo and engine jettison controls — are within easy reach (engine jettison controls are included only if the ship has atomic drives — cargo jettison controls are standard). In addition to the master control panel, the pilot's position allows use of the videocom radio, the intercom system, the hull camera system, the radar and the hull skin sensor readouts.

All programs may normally be accessed.

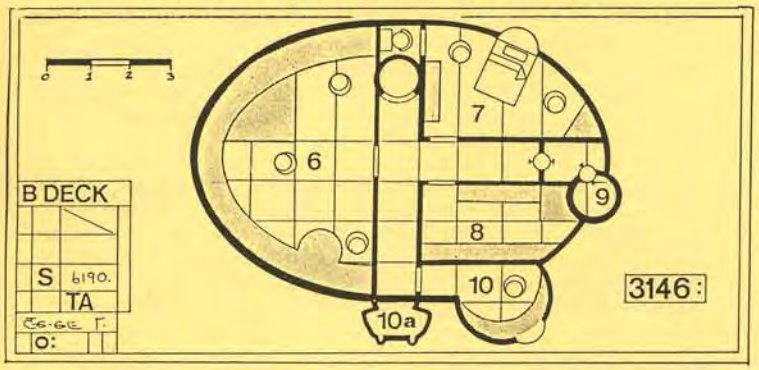
The adjacent console duplicates some of the controls, allowing a co-pilot to monitor the ship's functions as well. Computer access from this console is restricted to the Drive, Alarm, Damage Control and Communications programs.

3. Communications position: Usually unoccupied, this console is the central control for the ship's communication and detection equipment — the videocom radio, the intercom system, the hull camera system, the radar and the hull skin sensors. Only from here can computer data be transmitted (for example, cargo manifests to a customs inspection ship) to an external system through the videocom radio.

4. Fire Control position: This is the primary control position for the chin mounted laser battery (10 & 10A) and control of the weapon is normally assigned to this position. A character with Energy Weapons Gunnery skill may use his or her subskills from this console to influence the success of any fire from the laser battery.

5. Engineer's Monitoring position: This console allows indirect monitoring of the ship's engineering functions through Drive, Alarm and Damage Control programs. The console also includes a separate intercom link (not connected to the central intercom) to the workpods, the engineering decks (E and G Decks) and the spacesuit radios.

'B' Deck: Computer and Avionics



6. Computer compartment: This compartment is built to hull standards, and the door is fortified. Only the ship's master, the pilot and the engineer can enter and a security code must be entered at the Pilot's position (2) before the door will open.

The compartment contains the ship's computer, a level 4 machine, and the bulk of the ship's avionics — the electronic, detection and communications equipment. This includes the hull camera control, the radar installation, the astrogation electronics package and the videocom system.

The computer runs all the programs needed on the ship. These include Drive, Computer Lockout, Astrogation, Alarm, Damage Control, Cargo Handling, Laser Battery, Skin Sensor, Life Support, Installation (Ship) Security-4, Commerce-2, Communications-2, Computer Security-3, Information Storage-3, Bureaucracy-3, and Analysis-4 programs, which are supplied as standard. There is sufficient space to expand the computer to a maximum of 500 function points.

7. Pilot's Cabin: The pilot's cabin is deliberately placed within the ship as close as possible to the Bridge. In addition to the usual fixtures, the pilot's cabin has its own toilet facilities and a small automatic galley that can provide hot drinks and quick snacks. The Computer terminal is linked directly to the Drive and Alarm programs and is programmed to alert the off-duty pilot to any major malfunction in the ship's systems.

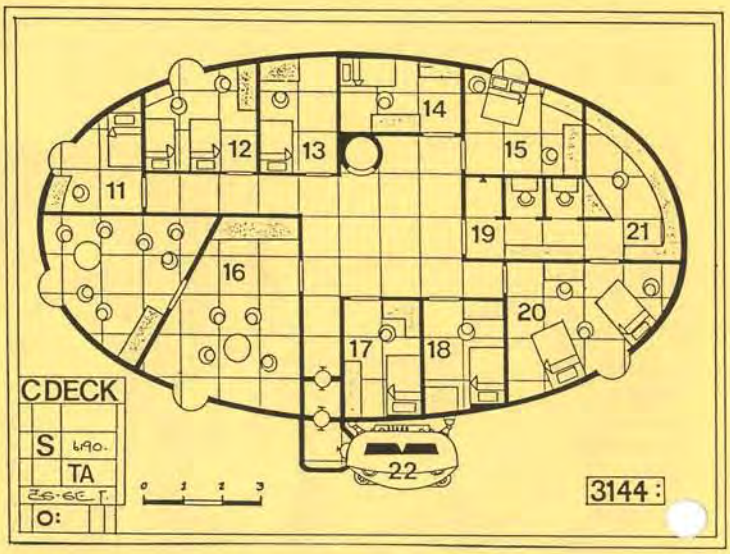
8. Arms Locker: The Arms Locker will only open under the same circumstances as the Computer Compartment (6). When delivered from the airdock, the arms locker is not usually supplied with weaponry, but a small weapons workbench is fitted.

9. Escape Pod: The ship's one escape pod is intended for the pilot's use. In an emergency, the pilot is expected to remain at the control console until the last possible moment and then escape aboard this pod.

10 & 10A. Secondary Fire Control, Laser Battery and Radar Mounting: All the functions of the Fire Control position (4) on the bridge are duplicated here, with the added thrill of being able to watch the laser battery in action.

Major repairs to the laser battery or radar mounting (10A) can only be made from outside the ship, but some minor circuitry can be reached from inside. If the laser battery or radar system is damaged in combat, there is a 15% chance that a repair can be made from within the ship.

'C' Deck: Forward Crew Quarters



11-15. Cabins: Two of the cabins are for double occupancy, one (12) has two single berths, while the other (15) has a double bed installed.

16. Recreation Lounge: The recreation area has a large screen computer terminal linked to the entertainment section of the Communications program. A small automatic galley, capable of providing drinks and snacks, is also fitted. In emergencies, this area can be converted into adequate — if somewhat uncomfortable — passenger space.

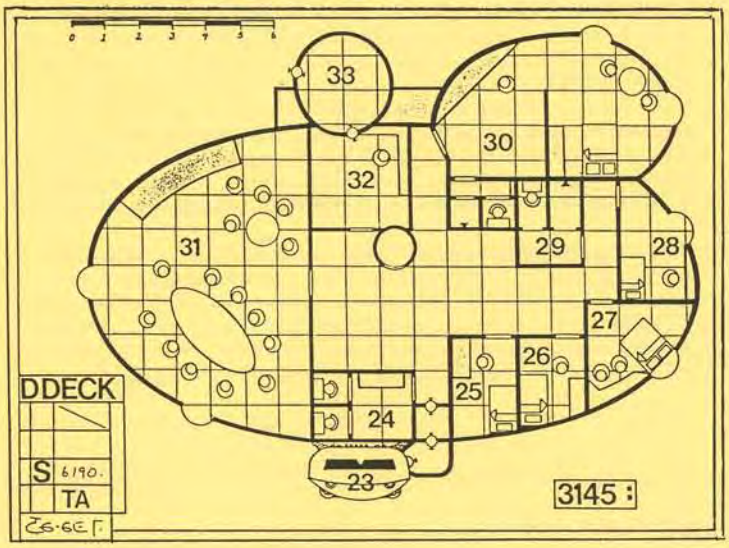
17 & 18. Guard Cabins: Cargo guards, provided by the cargo owner(s) to prevent the ship and cargo being 'lost', are allocated special cabins. These differ from normal cabins in that the doors are fortified, a weapon power clip/pack recharging station is provided and the computer terminal is allowed access to Analysis, Information Storage, Commerce, and Installation Security programs.

19. Toilets and Shower: The toilets and shower are standard space-going models, designed for use in zero gravity conditions.

20 & 21. Sick Bay & Dispensary allocation: These two compartments are intended for use as a sick bay and medical office. An augmented (with a complete set of spare drugs) medkit is included when the ship is launched, along with two beds and a computer terminal.

22. Lifeboat: The lifeboat is a standard model (see **Knight Hawks Campaign Book** p17), streamlined for planetary landings, and it has a primitive autopilot.

'D' Deck: Aft Crew Quarters



23. Lifeboat: Identical to the lifeboat on 'C' Deck (22).

24. Toilets: The toilet is designed for use in zero gravity conditions as well as in the artificial gravity of ship acceleration or deceleration.

25 & 26. Guard Cabins: Identical in all major respects to guard cabins 16 & 17 ('C' Deck).

27 & 28. Cabins: One of these cabins (27) is equipped for double occupancy with a double bed, while the other has a single berth.

29. Toilet and Shower: The toilet and shower are standard space-going models, identical to those on 'C' Deck (19).

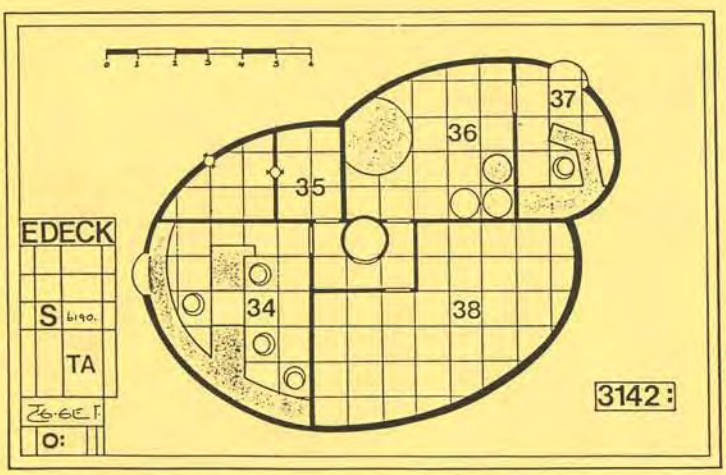
30. Owner's or Master's Cabin: This is the most comfortably appointed cabin on the entire ship, and is usually decorated to suit the owner's taste. The cabin has its own shower and toilet facilities, is fitted with a king-size bed, and has an automatic galley that serves any meal within its programming (the programming can be varied to suit the user's requirements). When not in use by the owner or ship's master, this cabin can be used as first class passenger accommodation.

31. Crew Mess Area: The mess area has the largest galley on board the ship, capable of providing any good quality standard food — or at least a reasonable imitation. The computer terminal in here is, unless there are passengers aboard, always linked to the Alarm and Installation Security programs and set to alert any crew members should an emergency occur.

32. Forward Airlock Compartment: In addition to a simple manual control panel for the airlock, this compartment also contains a dozen spacesuit lockers. A rack for storing rocket packs is fitted, along with a shower unit for cleaning suits of any contaminating material.

33. Forward Airlock: The forward airlock is used for passenger and crew transfers — whether in a station dock or between ships in flight.

'E' Deck: Forward Engineering Deck



34. Secondary (Emergency) Bridge: The door to this compartment is fortified, and the cardlock will only open for the ship's master, the pilot or the engineer. All the functions of the Bridge (A Deck) are duplicated, but to prevent the ship being hi-jacked, the computer will only accept commands from here if those commands have been authorised by the ship's master or the pilot. However, the computer's Installation Security program will automatically accept the secondary bridge as a valid control centre if 'A' Deck is no longer functional (eg if the Damage Control Program reports that the hull has been breached, or the Life Support program reports that the Bridge is in vacuum).

35. Middle Airlock: This hatchway is usually used for the loading of passenger luggage and small items of cargo that must be carried in a pressurized environment. Unless the ship's master has authorised the transfer of luggage with the Installation Security program, this airlock will be locked — and crew ID cards will not activate the cardlock.

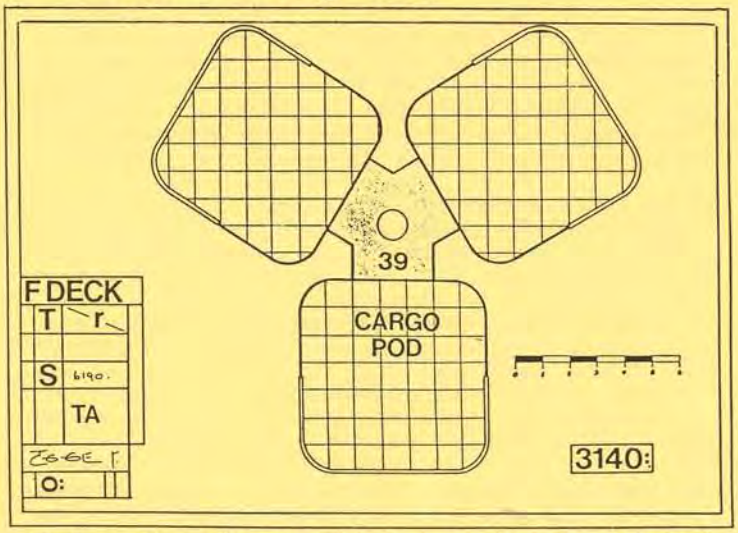
36. Forward Utility Access: The power, water and air supply for the forward decks of the ship can all be serviced in this compartment. The majority of the compartment is taken up with the circuitry for these functions, and — most importantly of all — the back-up life support unit (also see **Security Systems**).

This unit is not controlled directly by the ship's main computer, but has its own dedicated processor (a small level 1 computer running only a Life Support program). The back-up LSU is normally used only in emergencies, but with both life support units running an East Indiaman can carry a maximum of 70 beings, including the crew. Conditions in this situation would not be pleasant, but everybody would survive.

37. Cargo Arm Control: The computer terminal at this location is modified to include a joystick controller for the cargo loading arm (48) and release controls for the cargo pods — either 'soft' release, or to jettison the cargo. The terminal also has automatic access to the computer's Commerce program. The compartment is only used when cargo is being moved while the ship is docked, or as a security station because of the view of the outer hull that it commands.

38. Luggage Space: This is simply a pressurized hold for any luggage or delicate cargoes. It is normally kept locked during flights.

'F Deck': The Cargo Hold

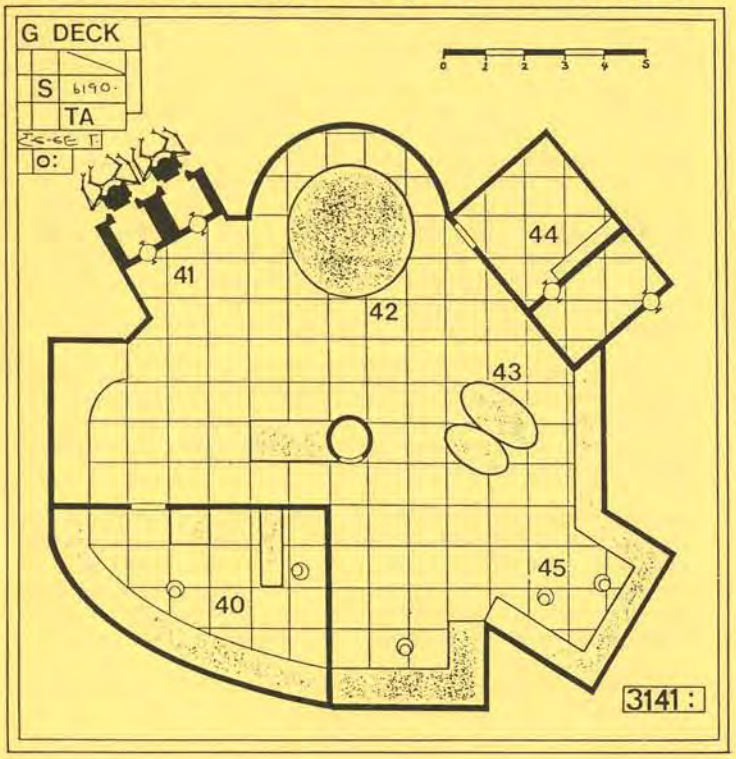


39. Cargo Decks: The nine cargo bays or pods on board an East Indiaman are all 14 metres square and 50 metres high and are arranged in groups of three around the central 'spine' of the ship - giving three 'cargo decks'. The entire outer half of the cargo pod can be swung open to facilitate loading and unloading and, as a result, the standard cargo pods are not pressurized.

The cargo pods have no connection (other than simple monitoring devices) with the interior of the ship, and are detachable — in emergencies they can be jettisoned from the pilot's position (2) on the bridge or Cargo Arm Control (37). This makes East Indiamen ideal for carrying high risk dangerous loads. Jettisoning pods takes 10 turns (one minute), and the jettisoning ship must change course after doing so to distance itself from the cargo pods.

Many of the larger corporations that own East Indiamen do not bother to unload individual pods from ships that are on regular scheduled flights — the entire pod is simply removed and replaced by a cargo pod containing the manifest for the ship's next destination. This minimizes the amount of time that a ship must spend in dock, as replacing a pod takes two hours. Pods that are part of the same group of three in a deck may not be worked on simultaneously.

'G' Deck: Aft Engineering and Maintenance



40. Workshop: The workshop contains sufficient tools to carry out most running repairs to the ship — the equivalent of a robcomkit, a techkit and an engineer's toolbox — although no inssuit is provided. A laser powertorch — and a bench mounting to turn it into a drill or lathe cutter is also included in the standard workshop fittings, as is a power backpack. Normally the laser powertorch is plugged directly into the ship's power supply when used in here.

41. Workpods: Two workpods (see the **Knight Hawks Campaign Book** p30) are fitted as standard. Whenever a workpod is used and then repositioned in its launch cradle, diagnostic checks will be carried out by the ship's computer and the pod will be refueled if this is required. Any repairs that are must be carried out on the pod will be displayed on the engineer's monitoring terminal on the Bridge (5) or here on G Deck (45).

42. Main Life Support Unit: This unit is run by the computer and is the one that is normally in operation. This one unit can supply the air, food and water requirements of up to 35 beings, although conditions would be somewhat crowded.

43. Computer Parabatteries: These are a final emergency backup system (one type 4 and one type 3 parabattery) to enable the computer to function — in a severely impaired way — even if the main parabatteries of the ship are exhausted. If this system becomes the only power source for the computer it will suspend all the programs except for the Life Support and Communications programs.

44. Aft Airlock: The airlock has a simple manual control panel. A rack for storing rocket packs is fitted, along with a shower unit for suit cleaning. Three rocket packs plus refills are provided by the ship's builders. On ships with atomic drives two engineering inssuits are also provided.

45. Engineering Monitoring: This console monitors all of the engineering functions of the ship through the Drive, Alarm and Damage Control programs. The serviceability of other ship systems — such as the computer, workpods, camera system and the like — is also displayed here. The console also includes a separate intercom link (not connected to the ship's central intercom) to the workpods, the forward engineering deck, the engineer's monitoring position (5) on the Bridge and the spacesuit radios.

External Hull Features

46. Drive Access: The drive access tunnels are built into the engine struts and allow superficial inspection of the engine components and fuel tanks. Major repairs have to be made from outside the ship. Aboard some ships the 'keel' engine strut has been modified to include a cubic metre of storage space, suitable for smuggling small, very high value illicit cargoes.

47. Main Parabatteries: The main parabatteries provide all the ship's power when the drives are off and the ship is not connected to an external power source (in an airdock for example). These batteries are the equivalent 15 type 4 parabatteries (a total power store of 60,000 SEU) and are automatically recharged when the drives are operational.

Because of their placement within the ship, the parabatteries have an additional use as stern armour. When an East Indiaman is fired on from directly astern, the first 15 points of hull damage may be taken as hits upon the batteries. The equivalent power storage capability of one type 4 parabattery is lost for each point of hull damage taken in this fashion.

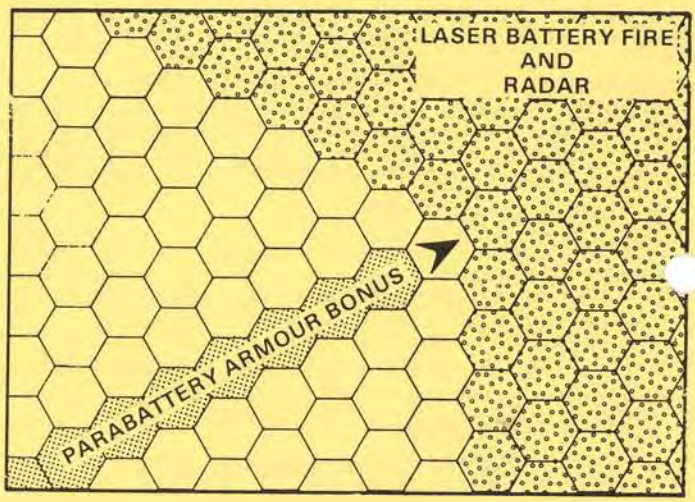
48. Cargo Loading Arm: The cargo loading arm is installed on a 35 metre diameter circular track that runs around the spine of the ship between the first and second set of cargo bays. From here, the cargo arm can be extended to reach into any of the cargo pods — taking ten hours to load or unload the entire hold — or it can assist in releasing a pod, reducing the time needed to do this to one hour.

REFEREE'S Notes

In **Knight Hawks** game terms all standard East Indiamen have the following statistics:

Standard East Indiaman (Freighter)

Hull Points:	**50**
Weaponry:	**Laser Battery**
Defences:	**Reflective Hull**
Damage Control Rating (DCR)	**50**
Acceleration/Deceleration Factor (ADF)	**1**
Manoeuvre Rating (MR)	**3**



Design Faults on the East Indiaman Class

There are a number of design faults in the East Indiaman class that characters should not find out about, except through bitter experience. The escape pod (9) is too far away from the Bridge to be reached in a convenient time. If anyone attempts to escape from the Bridge by this route in an emergency (see **Escaping from Destroyed Ships, Knight Hawks Campaign Book** p37) the referee should secretly roll 2d10. This is the extra time in six-second turns that it takes the elevator to reach the bridge and then bring the character back down to 'B' Deck.

The chin mounted laser battery (10A) is so placed that it is incapable of firing on a target that is 'above' the ship or behind it. In terms of the Knight Hawks boardgame, this means that the laser battery is restricted to firing at targets within the shaded area of the diagram. Because it is mounted in the same place, the radar system can only 'see' objects that fall within the same zone.

Emergency suits: These are little more than person-shaped airtight plastic bags with an cartridge that provides 10 minutes of air. An emergency suit has no value as armour, nor is it self-sealing. It can, however, be put on in 3 turns (a vrusk emergency suit takes 4 turns to put on), and a normal spacesuit may be worn on top.

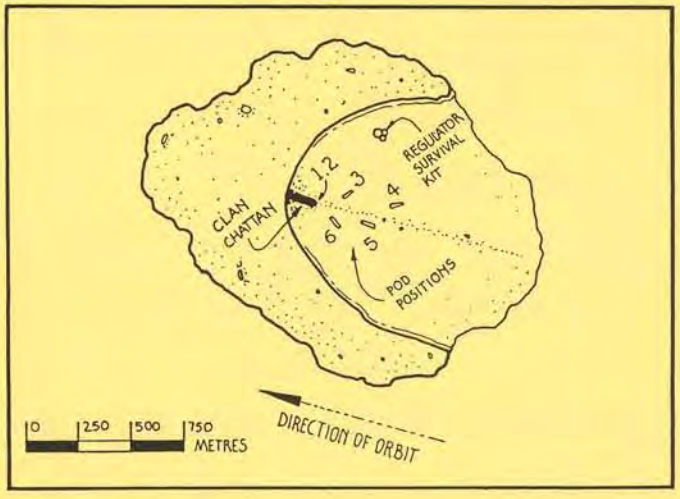
Emergency suits cost Cr400 and replacement air cartridges cost Cr25. Both are freely available at all starports. Being a predominantly human company, Tallyman Associates provide a free human emergency suit for each cabin on any new ship launched from their airdocks.

The UPRS Clan Chattan

The Clan Chattan collided with Plutarch after leaving the Void and was flying stern first with the drives on to decelerate from jump speed. As a result, Plutarch was in the Clan Chattan's radar 'blind spot', and the asteroid wasn't even seen before the collision took place.

Fortunately — although the majority of the crew didn't live to appreciate the fact — the Clan Chattan did not strike Plutarch squarely, but at an angle along the asteroid's longest axis. The damage to the asteroid was minimal — one more impact crater made little difference. Most of the Clan Chattan eventually came to rest against a fracture line caused in a collision with another asteroid centuries earlier. The rest of the ship was spread in a thin layer along the line of the crash.

The diagram shows the position of the various parts of the wreck, and also gives the location of the Regulators' survival unit — the wreckage provides a convenient marker for resupply vessels.



Although the Clan Chattan is no longer spaceworthy, and will never be so again, the ship has not been totally destroyed. The angle of the crash, and the ship's attitude at impact, meant that much of the momentum of the ship was absorbed by the ship's drive nacelles and the parabattery housing. The aft engineering deck and the keel mounted cargo pods also cushioned much of the force of the impact.

The condition of the ship is listed below (the numbers and letters in brackets refer to the East Indiaman deck plans). The referee will find it useful to mark the damaged and destroyed locations on a copy of the plans, and **IMAGINE** magazine grants permission to photocopy the deck plans for this purpose. References to areas on board the Paltsa Ryby will be distinguished by a 'P' prefix, eg P48 the cargo arm.

The recreation lounge (16), the guard cabins (17, 18, 25 & 26), the lifeboats (22 & 23), the toilets (24), the crew mess area (31), the emergency bridge (34), the luggage space (38), the three keel mounted cargo pods (see 39), aft engineering and maintenance ('G' Deck), the drive access tunnels and engine struts (46), parabatteries (47), and the drives, have all been totally destroyed. The ship is simply a mass of wreckage, open to space at these points.

The hull on 'B' deck is severely cracked and warped and will no longer hold an atmosphere, but apart from superficial damage caused by flying debris, the deck is still in one piece. The Bridge ('A' Deck), and escape pod (9) have survived virtually unscathed, although the Astrogation bubble (1) porthole has a crack in it which has let the ship's air out of this deck.

The body of Jasmine Cumae, the ship's master, will be found in the escape pod. Jasmine survived the crash, only to die of suffocation when the pod's life support ran out. The pod was damaged in the crash and could not be launched. Technically, Plutarch is part of Jasmine Cumae's estate.

The Cargo

The Clan Chattan was carrying a mixed cargo on her last voyage — as might be expected on a ship carrying goods to a frontier colony. Of the six pods that survived the crash, two are still attached to the spine of the ship. The others broke free when the ship crashed, and are scattered along the crash line. All the pod hulls, except one, have cracked.

Glaz Ptitsy's cargo manifest for the Clan Chattan only lists what was on board, not what has survived, so unless the adventurers physically inspect the cargo pods or manage to get the Clan Chattan's computer working (see **Repairs**), they should not be told what is salvageable. For convenience, the surviving cargo pods are designated 1 to 6. Pods 1 & 2 (the port forward and middle cargo pods) are still attached to the Clan Chattan, the others lie in the positions indicated on the diagram. Listed below are the contents of the various pods, their value and other relevant details.

Pod 1. Agricultural Chemicals — granulated fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides — valued at Cr40,000. Recovery will take 45 labour-hours.

Several of the chemical containers have split, spilling their contents into the pod. Anyone who enters the pod will automatically pick up chemical dust on his or her spacesuit. Unless this is washed off under the spacesuit shower in the forward airlock (P32) the Paltsa Ryby will be contaminated by the various pesticides.

This contamination is handled as though it is a -5/2d10 infection. A character with medical skill can use the Diagnosis and Neutralize Toxins subskills as normal — even though these chemicals are rated as an infection rather than a poison. The chemicals will result in a permanent loss of 1d10 of a random ability even when 'cured'.

Pod 2. Transposant Pod — 1800 colonial draftees and commercial dissidents, all indentured labour for LDC — contracts valued at an average of Cr3500, total value Cr6.3 million. Transposant pods are built to withstand a good deal of rough treatment — the cargo is, after all, relatively delicate. The transposants are still alive, making this the most valuable salvage on the wreck.

The pod cannot be unloaded and the storage berths transferred as this would kill the transposants. The entire pod must be released from the wreck and moved to the Paltsa Ryby. (The replaced pod will have to be abandoned on Plutarch — possibly for later collection). Removal of the pod is impossible without the aid of the Clan Chattan's cargo arm (48), and the pod release mechanism has also been damaged. Once the pod release and arm are working (see **Repairs** below), removing the pod and connecting it to the Paltsa Ryby will take at least 4 hours for three people (one person on each cargo arm, and one supervising).

There is a 30% chance (-5% per level of technician skill) that the transposant pod will slip during the transfer, causing 1d10 points of hull damage to the Paltsa Ryby.

Pod 3. Agricultural machinery — robot ploughs, harvesters and fruit pickers — value Cr35,000. This pod has split open on impact and much of the machinery is damaged — only 35% is recoverable (value Cr12,550). Collecting the various items of machinery and loading them into one of the Paltsa Ryby's pods will take 30 labour-hours.

Pod 4. Mixed cargo — luxury goods and foodstuffs, computer parts, jetcopter spares, three crates of UPF SpaceMail parcels, industrial laboratory equipment — total value Cr130,000.

15% of the cargo in this pod has been destroyed, but the most valuable items — the SpaceMail and a case of rare wine — are still intact, although the sediment in the wine has been disturbed. The SpaceMail and wine are valued at Cr30,000 (for insurance purposes) and Cr12,500 respectively. Extracting the parcels and the wine from the wreckage will take 4 labour-hours, while recovering the rest of the cargo will take a further 16 labour-hours.

Pod 5. UPF chartered pod — weapons and other equipment for the Laco militia battalion — value Cr120,000. The entire contents of this pod have survived intact, and can be recovered in 30 labour-hours. The exact contents are left to the referee's discretion, but should include most of the lighter weapons and defensive armour listed in the Alpha Dawn rules.

If the adventurers decide to use any of the weaponry from this pod, it should be remembered that it is all still in its original packing, and none of the power or ammunition clips are charged or loaded. Readying any of these weapons will take a character with military skill one hour to clean and check the weapon — in addition to the time that must be spent charging or loading clips.

Pod 6. Medical supplies — drugs, surgical consumables and a diagnostic computer — value Cr75,000. The contents of this pod were carefully packed against violent acceleration, and have survived remarkably well. Only 10% of the cargo — mostly drugs — has been damaged beyond salvage. Recovery will take 35 labour-hours.

Repairs

Major repairs to the Clan Chattan are out of the question, but it is possible to effect some minor repairs to one or two of the ship's systems, in particular the pod release mechanism and the cargo arm (48). However, all the repairs are pointless without a power source. The Clan Chattan's parabatteries are gone, and taking power from the Paltsa Ryby would require the facilities of a dockyard. There is another solution — the Auricon Regulators possess a backup type 2 generator for their survival unit. This is capable of producing enough power for the computer or the cargo arm — but not both at the same time.

Assuming that the Regulators can be persuaded — by whatever means — to part with their generator, repairs can be carried out using the appropriate subskills. A character using the Repairing Computers subskill suffers a -30% penalty, and can roll once per hour for success. Once the computer is repaired, the Displaying Information subskill suffers a -15% penalty. These are the only two subskills that can be used on the Clan Chattan's computer.

A character using the Repairing Machinery subskill to mend the cargo arm (48) and the pod release mechanism suffers a -10% penalty, and a roll for success may only be made every two hours. Once repaired, a dexterity of 60 or more or Technician skill level 2, is required to avoid causing a breakdown (-20% to repair). The use of the Clan Chattan's cargo arm is required to move the transposants (pod 2) and will reduce the time that need be spent unloading pod 1 to six hours work for the arm operator.

The Wreckers

Sixty hours after the adventurers begin their salvage operation, another ship will arrive at Plutarch. This is the Lizzie Borden — a flying junkyard if there ever was one. The Lizzie Borden has been built from the wreckage of nearly as many space ships as it has parts — it was once a merchant ship, but has, over the years, grown into its current ugly self, absolutely unrecognisable as a definable class of vessel.

The Lizzie Borden has the following statistics:

Lizzie Borden (freighter/hulk)

Hull Points	30
Weaponry:	Laser Cannon
	Assault Rocket Launcher, 2 Rockets
Defences:	Reflective Hull*
Damage Control Rating (DCR)	20**
Acceleration/Deceleration Factor (ADF)	1/4***
Maneouvre Rating (MR)	1

* The reflective hull only covers part of the ship. There is a 60% chance that a shot on the Lizzie Borden will hit an area without defences.

** The low DCR reflects the fact that the ship is built from salvaged parts — and that the computer cannot cope with the complexity of the problem this presents.

*** The Lizzie Borden normally uses ion drives (ADF 1), but at some point in the crew salvaged a C type atomic drive which is now attached to one of the ship's drive struts. In emergencies this drive is used to give the improved ADF.

The referee should note that no deck plans are provided for the Lizzie Borden — the crew will not allow anybody on board the vessel in any circumstances. If the adventurers try to take it by force the referee should use the small freighter plans supplied in the Knight Hawks set.

Gosht-e-nan, a Yazirian, is the leader of the Lizzie Borden's crew, a group of acquisitive souls who live by one motto: 'If it's not nailed down, it's ours; if we can prise it free — it's not nailed down!' Gosht-e-nan wants to strip the wreck of the Clan Chattan for spare parts to improve the Lizzie Borden. He will agree to Lt Brett's landing conditions, confining his larcenous intentions to the Clan Chattan.

There will never be more than two members of the Lizzie Borden's crew working away from the ship at any one time (Steinman will never leave the ship). They will remove all the useful components of the Clan Chattan that are relatively intact — the computer, the escape pod, the electronics on the ship bridge. They will then turn their attention to the cargo pods, and if not watched will load the contents of pods 4, 5 & 6 into the Lizzie Borden's hold.

If they are stopped, they will become hostile. They will retreat to the Lizzie Borden, and after 1d10 hours will attack the adventurers, though again, never more than two of the wreckers will leave their ship.

If they are defeated, they will once again retreat to their ship. Gosht-e-nan will attack the Paltsa Ryby using the laser cannon. The instant that the Lizzie Borden suffers damage, they will accelerate away from Plutarch using the atomic drive.

The referee should play these NPCs as thoroughly shifty, disreputable types — who will (and have) slit throats for the price of a drink.

The Wreckers

Name	STR/STA	DEX/RS	INT/LOG	PER/LDR	IM	RW†	M.
Gosht-e-	30/50	60/65	40/30	35/60	7	90	50
Steinman	40/60	45/45	40/50	30/45	5	33	25
Tyler	60/40	70/65	35/50	75/25	7	55	35
Todd	5/15	80/90	60/75	50/45	9	60	40
Angel	95/40	20/20	05/05	01/01	2	10	43

Skills:

Gosht-e-: Beam Weapons 6, Gunnery (Energy Weapons) 3, Melee Weapons 2
(Yazirian Male) Battle Rage 35.

Steinman: Beam Weapons 1, Computer 6, Technician 6, Pilot 2, Astrogation 3.
(Human Male)

Tyler: Martial Arts 3, Projectile Weapons 2, Technician 4, Robotics 3, Engineering 3.
(Human Female)

Todd: Beam Weapons 1, Projectile Weapons 2, Martial Arts 1, Medical 1, Psycho-Social 2. (Human Male)

Angel: none.
(Yazirian Male) Battle Rage 50.

Base chance to hit does not take into account Yazirian Battle Rage or Martial Arts skill.

All have space suits and armour. Gosht-e-nan and Steinman are arm[illegible] with laser pistols and vibroknives, while Todd has a laser rifle. Tyler uses a pair of matched sawn-off shotguns with three-round clips (see **New Equipment**). If a fight breaks out Angel will be allowed to use an axe — as a special treat.

Ending the Adventure and Experience

Effectively, the adventure ends when the Paltsa Ryby arrives at Laco starport and offloads the cargo. Glaz Ptitsy will be paid by LDC, and will then pay the adventurers. This will take about a week or so while the LDC management argue with Glaz over the state of the recovered cargo and its value.

The referee should award 5 experience points to those characters who performed well, 3 to those who performance was adequate, and 1 to those 'along for the ride'. A bonus of 10 experience points (divided in any way the referee sees fit) can be awarded to the adventurers as a group for an exceptional performance (eg for dealing with the potential opposition in a diplomatic manner without the use of guns etc).

Credits

Design: Mike Brunton
Artwork: Alan Gambril
Cartography: Paul Ruiz

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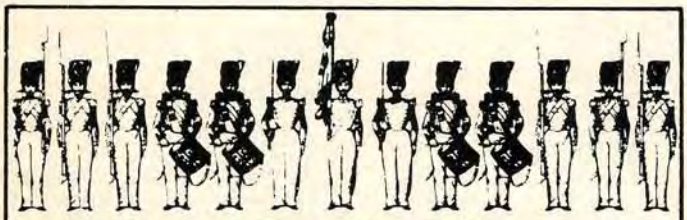

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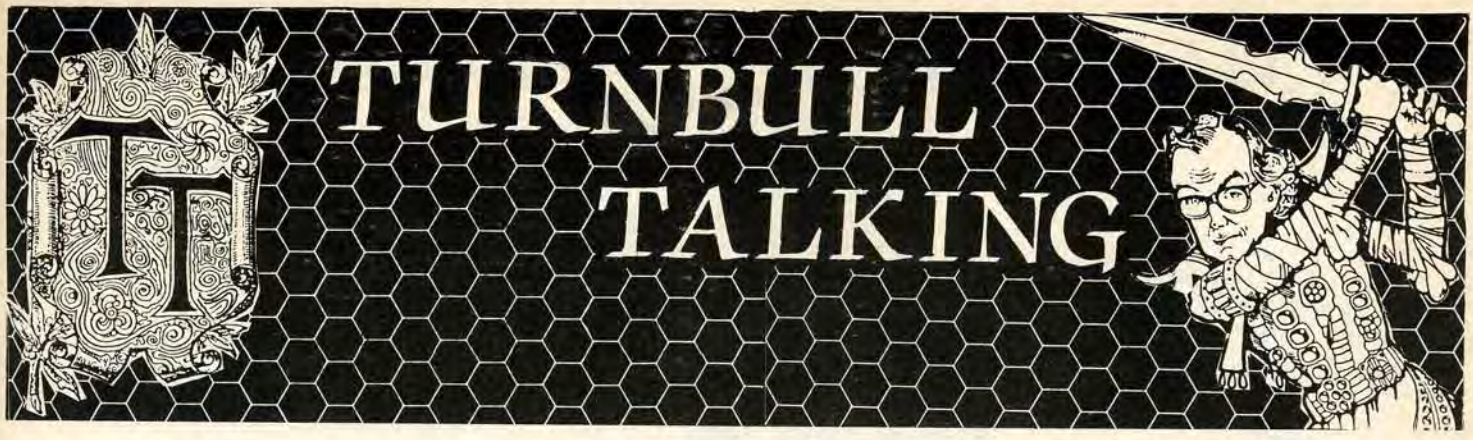

A little space — but bigger than it used to be — for the publisher to air his views

Role-playing games are, almost by definition, full of uncertain areas. Whatever game you are talking about, assuming it's a reasonable, sensible product, the canvas of the game is so broad that we can't expect the poor designers to provide rules covering every tiny eventuality. Nor can they hope to cover everything even if they try. The fact that they can't not only makes purchase of the game a realistic objective — who wants to run up a decade of mortgage to buy the cartload of rule-books which would result? — but this is also one of the many things which make RPGs so enjoyable and enduring.

And, of course, it gives folk like me something to talk about.

One problem I'd like to tackle concerns experience points — more specifically the *buying* of experience points with the loot just carted up from the depths of the dungeon. You all remember the article **What To Do With A Dragon's Treasure** from last issue, don't you? When the average adventurer leaves the dangers behind and comes home, the odds are that he has more than a little cash with him. He must, of course, pay the landlady, stock up the freezer, get the armour re-tailored, and take the girlfriend out. But even after these things there is usually a lot left over, and at times like this, one's thoughts turn to the purchase of magical items (which many DMs, quite sensibly, won't allow, or restrict heavily) or to the purchase of experience.

The question is — having acquired, say, 5000gp on an adventure, does that entitle the adventure to 5000xp *and* the 5000 in cash, or to just one or the other?

Having played this game for some years, and having adopted one interpretation a long time ago (in fact I can't remember there having been any debate about this at the time), I'm surprised to learn that there are two strong schools of thought on this issue. I suppose this goes to show how insular one gets — I should not be surprised at all. One school of thought says the adventurer uses the gold to buy the experience gain (training, and so forth), whereas the other school allows him the cash as well.

The well-thumbed **Players Handbook** and **Dungeon Masters Guide** are not a great help here. Pages 106-7 in the former defend the idea of awarding experience points for getting gold — and it's right to do so somewhere, for this in itself is something that some people find worrying — but don't specifically say whether the gold is cashed in or not. Similarly, pages 84-5 of the latter give Gary's line of thought on the matter, and put forward his views on how the whole matter should be handled in such a way as not to bore the players stiff; but again, there's no specific mention of what happens to the cash.

One piece (**DMG**, p85) gives the strongest hint, though this can be read either way: 'While it is more "realistic" for clerics to study holy writings .... to gain experience, it would not make a playable game roll along. Similarly, fighters should be exercising, riding .... and engaging in weapons practice of various sorts to gain real expertise (experience); magic-users should be deciphering old scrolls, searching ancient tomes.... All very realistic, but conducive to non-game boredom!'

This *seems* to say that the adventurer gets the experience and keeps the cash, but I'm not really convinced either way.

To put my cards on the table, I have always used the more stringent condition — you get the cash *or* the experience, not both. My reasoning was simply that the gaining of experience by using cash covers just the sort of thing Gary was talking about in the DMG — fighters practising combat, magic users working on dusty tomes, and so forth. These things cost money. As a fighter anxious for a bit of sword-play practice, you can't just wander up to some bloke in the street and start thumping him — he might just object, and people soon start talking about this sort of unsocial misbehaviour. What you have to do is hire someone who will help you to learn new skills and hone old ones, and the instructors, or even just the sparring partners, aren't going to give you their services for free. The same goes for the musty tomes; try pinching them out of the local library to study for a few months, and someone is going to disagree with your assumption of property rights — at the very least you need to pay a library fee, and the odds are you are going to have to pay an extortionate sum to purchase.

So, I cash in whatever my character can afford in exchange for experience points, which may explain why, though the group I play the AD&D® game with has been meeting every couple of months for a weekend for the last eight years, the highest level of character we have is 10th.

But there's nothing sacrosanct about this interpretation, and the opposite can work equally well. In the end, it's a matter of balance. If you, as DM, allow your players either cash or the xp equivalent at the end of the adventure, but not both, then you can afford to load your adventure more richly than the DM who allows both. On the other hand, if you allow both, you may want to make the world in which you set your adventure such an expensive place to live in (for instance, to get any information at all the bribes are horrendous), that the ultimate rewards gained by the characters are kept in the balance you want.

One problem does arise, however. What interpretation has been used by the various designers of the many modules now on the market? In these cases, the balance is already written into the module externally, and if you, as DM, take the module literally, it may not fit in with your ideas of how rich the rewards should be to the successful party. In which case, my suggestion is that you don't treat the module as if it were the tablets from Mount Sinai — alter the balance yourself before or during play to get things the way you want. *You're* the DM, not the designer of the module, and you know best what fits the gaming style of your group of players.

I would be intrigued to hear from DMs and players with their views on this little matter. Particularly, how do you justify the system you have adopted, in terms of 'realism' (if that's what turns you on), or play-balance? Let me know — and while you're at it, you had better tell me if there are any other little quirks you have developed in the way you play.

Don Turnbull

GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS

by Graeme Davis

One of my favourite films is *The Seven Samurai*. The story of a group of hired fighters defending a village from the depredations of bandits is stirring stuff, guaranteed to appeal to the hero in anyone. The plot was so popular, in fact, that it was re-made as a western — *The Magnificent Seven* — which in turn has been remade as a space opera, *Battle Beyond the Stars*. It was even used in one episode of the TV comedy *Steptoe & Son*, in which a protection-racket gang is routed by a group of pensioners, who had been using their concessionary tickets to watch Bruce Lee films in the local cinema! And, of course, Mike Brunton's **AD&D**® scenario *Black Roses* in issue 11 was not a million miles from the same plot.

This example sums up what this short series of articles is all about — translated into gaming terms, what we have here is a **Bushido** adventure which has been adapted for the **BOOT HILL**® game, for, say the **Space Opera** or **STAR FRONTIERS**® games, and for the **AD&D** game (or possibly the **GANGBUSTERS**™ game or even **MSPE**?).

Looking through the advertising in a few back issues, I managed to compile a list of about 50 RPGs available to the UK gamer. The two UK prozines have published material relating to scarcely 20 of them, with the 'big four' of the **D&D**®, **AD&D**, **RuneQuest** and **Traveller** games commanding at least 90% of the limelight. The same situation exists with regard to published scenarios and other supplementary material, meaning that players of the less-popular games must create their own material or adapt that published for other games.

Every RPG is necessarily limited by the milieu which it sets out to cover and by the treatment it is given by its designers, and from time to time the referee of a role-playing campaign may wish to incorporate NPCs, weapons, creatures, or even whole scenarios from other systems to provide a change of pace or a new challenge.

In this article and those that follow, I shall be looking at various ways of converting material from one RPG system to another. But the differences between the huge number of RPG systems can be vast. If I were to give detailed notes on how to convert from every system to every other system, I would need about 2,500 articles to do it, and even supposing I did have a sufficiently detailed knowledge of every game, the series would take over 200 years at one instalment per month and I very much doubt that the editor would tolerate it.

Instead I shall be looking at things on a fairly general and theoretical level, and leaving it to the individual reader to decide which, if any, of my suggestions to use in a particular instance. I hope this approach will not be too obscure, and that my examples will be helpful.

Essentially, there are two golden rules to observe when converting between RPG systems: firstly, be familiar with both systems, and secondly, don't place too much importance on absolute mathematical accuracy. As any experienced referee knows, if you look after atmosphere and overall game balance, the rest will generally look after itself; so be guided by feel and instinct where a statistical approach become impossible or horrendously complicated.

Characters

The player character is arguably the most complex part of any RPG system, and it will be here that the differences in the mechanics of the various systems will cause the most problems. It will rarely be possible to convert a character from one system to another with total accuracy, but with a little work and improvisation it should be possible to come fairly close. Try to bear the character in mind rather than the statistics, and be prepared to tailor the results of calculations where necessary.

In most cases, the statistics which make up a character can be divided under the following headings:

Attributes
Hit points
Weapons and other skills.

This first article will deal with character attributes, while hit points, weapons, etc will follow in a subsequent instalment.

Attributes

There are two basic points to consider when dealing with character attributes — firstly, how the initial scores have been generated, and secondly, whether they are improvable.

In many cases, initial attribute scores are generated by means of dice rolls, the most common being three six sided dice (3d6). The tables (for which I am indebted to Anthony R Allan) show some of the more common dice rolls used to generate RPG characters. The column headed **n**

shows the number of ways in which a certain score can be obtained. For example, there is only one way to score 3 on 3d6 — 1-1-1 — while there are three ways to score 4 — 1-1-2, 1-2-1, 2-1-1. The column headed **p%** gives the percentage chance of gaining the given score, and the column headed **P%** gives the chance of scoring the given number *or less*.

You will notice that the closer you are to the middle of the score range, the more ways there are of rolling a particular score, and thus the easier it is to roll that score. The more dice you roll, the heavier the weighting towards the middle of the score range — compare the tables for 2d6, 3d6 and 4d6.

Given sufficient knowledge of statistics, and preferably a computer, it is easy enough to work out tables for any dice roll you need, but those given here should cover most requirements. With percentile dice, of course, there is only one way in which any score can be rolled, so that the probability of rolling any score is 1% and the cumulative probability (P%) is equal to the score itself.

Some systems start off with a percentile dice roll, and then modify it so as to eliminate hopelessly weak characters. **BOOT HILL** and **GANGBUSTERS** games both do this, using the following table:

Dice roll	Modifier
01-25	+25
26-50	+15
51-70	+10
71-90	+5
91-00	+0

This means that no score can be less than 26 (01+25), and produces a rather odd probability distribution. Try working it out for yourself. Write down all the possible scores from 26 to 100 and then see how many ways there are of arriving at each individual score. Rather than being weighted towards scores in the middle of the range, this system cuts out low scores altogether, and produces four areas with a slightly higher probability.

It is fairly straightforward to convert attributes from one system to another using these tables, provided that both systems use non-improvable scores generated by dice rolls.

The first stage is to list the attributes used in both systems. **Strength, intelligence** and **dexterity** appear in most systems in one form or another, and some other attributes may be special cases or sub-divisions of these. For example, strength may be split into **strength** and **constitution**, contrasting muscle-power with resilience, and similarly **will power** or **wisdom** may be separate from **intelligence**, and dexterity may be split into **co-ordination, agility, speed** and so on. These scores can be converted directly by looking up the P% figure on the appropriate table for the 'donor' system and taking the score with the same P% figure in the 'host' system.

Next, look at the attributes in the 'host' system which cannot be calculated in this way. Some of them might depend to an extent upon others — for example, one might expect **education** to be related to **intelligence**, or a **perception** or **observation** score might be affected by **intelligence** (mental alertness). This comparison should give some clues as to whether the scores in these attributes should be high medium or low, but it should only be used as a general guideline and precise scores should be generated randomly within the broad limits indicated.

Finally, any attributes not accounted for in the 'host' system should be generated randomly using the appropriate dice rolls. In some systems, attributes are generated which govern weapon and other skills (eg **gun accuracy** and **throwing accuracy** in **BOOT HILL**, **Expertise, Rapier** and **Dagger** for **En Garde**, **Driving** for **GANGBUSTERS**). These attributes should be left for the time being, and filled in after skills have been dealt with (see overleaf).

2d6

Score	n	p%	P%
2	1	2.778	2.778
3	2	5.556	8.333
4	3	8.333	16.667
5	4	11.111	27.778
6	5	13.889	41.667
7	6	16.667	58.333
8	5	13.889	71.667
9	4	11.111	83.333
10	3	8.333	91.667
11	2	5.556	97.223
12	1	2.778	100.000

4d6

Score	n	p%	P%
4	1	0.077	0.077
5	4	0.309	0.386
6	10	0.772	1.157
7	20	1.543	2.701
8	35	2.701	5.401
9	56	4.321	9.722
10	80	6.173	15.895
11	104	8.025	23.920
12	125	9.645	33.565
13	140	10.802	44.367
14	146	11.265	55.633
15	140	10.802	66.435
16	125	9.645	76.080
17	104	8.025	84.105
18	80	6.173	90.278
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22	10	0.772	99.614
23	4	0.309	99.923
24	1	0.077	100.000

2d10

Score	n	p%	P%
2	1	1.00	1.00
3	2	2.00	3.00
4	3	3.00	6.00
5	4	4.00	10.00
6	5	5.00	15.00
7	6	6.00	21.00
8	7	7.00	28.00
9	8	8.00	36.00
10	9	9.00	45.00
11	10	10.00	55.00
12	9	9.00	64.00
13	8	8.00	72.00
14	7	7.00	79.00
15	6	6.00	85.00
16	5	5.00	90.00
17	4	4.00	94.00
18	3	3.00	97.00
19	2	2.00	99.00
20	1	1.00	100.00

3d6

Score	n	p%	P%
3	1	0.463	0.463
4	3	1.389	1.852
5	6	2.778	4.630
6	10	4.630	9.259
7	15	6.944	25.926
8	21	9.722	25.926
9	25	11.574	37.500
10	27	12.500	50.000
11	27	12.500	62.500
12	25	11.574	74.074
13	21	9.722	83.796
14	15	6.944	90.741
15	10	4.630	95.370
16	6	2.778	98.148
17	3	1.389	99.537
18	1	0.463	100.000

4d6 discarding lowest die

Score	n	p%	P%
3	1	0.077	0.077
4	4	0.309	0.386
5	10	0.772	1.157
6	21	1.620	2.778
7	38	2.932	5.710
8	62	4.784	10.494
9	91	7.022	17.515
10	122	9.414	26.929
11	148	11.420	38.349
12	167	12.886	51.235
13	172	13.272	64.506
14	160	12.346	76.852
15	131	10.108	86.960
16	94	7.253	94.213
17	54	4.167	98.380
18	21	1.620	100.000

4d5

Score	n	p%	P%
4	1	0.16	0.16
5	4	0.64	0.80
6	10	1.60	2.40
7	20	3.20	5.60
8	35	5.60	11.20
9	52	8.32	19.52
10	68	10.88	30.40
11	80	12.80	69.60
12	85	13.60	56.80
13	80	12.80	69.60
14	68	10.88	80.48
15	52	8.32	88.80
16	35	5.60	94.40
17	20	3.20	97.60
18	10	1.60	99.20
19	4	0.64	99.84
20	1	0.16	100.00

Examples

1. A character from **En Garde** is to be converted for **Pirates and Plunder**.

En Garde has the following attributes: Strength, Expertise, Constitution and Endurance. All are generated on 3d6, except for Endurance, which is Strength x Constitution. Since this represents a hit point figure, it will be left for the present. Let us say that the En Garde character has the following attribute scores:

Strength: 16	P%: 98.148
Expertise: 11	P%:62.500
Constitution: 7	P%:16.204

The **Pirates & Plunder** attributes are: Strength, Intelligence, Agility, Movement, Stealth, Vision, Hearing, Senses, Constitution, Stamina, Wounds, Musket Training, Pistol Training, Swordsmanship Training, and Fist/Dagger Training.

That is quite a lot to fill in from three En Garde scores, and it is obvious that we cannot expect to cover all of them using the tables. All are generated on 2d10, except Senses which is the average of Vision and Hearing. There are some modifiers according to whether the character is a major or minor PC or NPC, but to cover those would make the task hopelessly complicated, so I have chosen to ignore them.

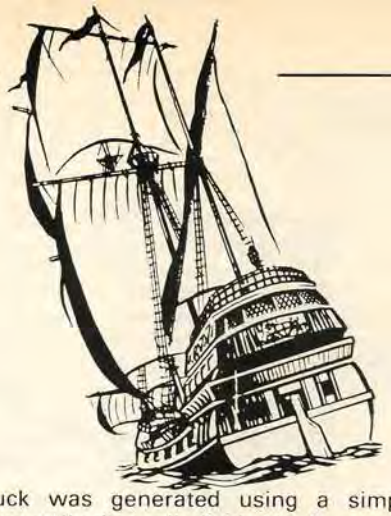
The attributes in common between the two systems are Strength and Constitution, and their P% of 98.148 and 16.204 respectively can be read off as 18 and 6 on the 2d10 table, giving the P&P character 18 strength and 6 constitution. The En Garde Expertise score corresponds to P&P Swordsmanship training, and its P% of 62.5 gives a 2d10 score of 12. This can be taken as it stands if desired, or noted down as a guideline for the treatment of skills later on. The P&P attributes of Stamina and Wounds are essentially hit point scores, and are ignored for now. The other P&P attributes are unrelated to those from En Garde and must be diced from scratch.

2. A character from the **GANGBUSTERS®** game is to be converted for use with **Call of Cthulhu**. The character has the following scores and P% figures — use them, if you wish, to check the table you have worked out for the Gangbusters attribute system.

Muscle: 98	P%: 71
Agility: 31	P%: 06
Observation: 49	P%: 33
Presence: 8*	P%: 80
Driving: 40	P%: 15
Luck: 48*	P%: 96

* These two character attributes were generated using a different system from the others. Presence was generated by a d10 roll using the following modification table:

Die roll	Modifier
1-3	+2
4-7	+1
8-10	+0



Luck was generated using a simple percentile dice roll, divided by 2.

The Call of Cthulhu attributes needed are Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, Constitution, Charisma, Power, Size and Education. All are generated using 3d6.

Strength (= Muscle), Dexterity (= Agility), and Charisma (= Presence) can all be converted straightforwardly using the P% column of the 3d6 table, giving the scores of 12, 6 and 13 respectively.

In generating the Intelligence score, the Gangbusters Observation score might be taken into account — it is low average, so the Call of Cthulhu Intelligence score should not be exceptional, although this only provides a vague hint. A 3d6 roll produces a score of 12, which the referee deems acceptable.

Constitution, averaged with Size, gives the hit point figure for Call of Cthulhu, so it may be preferred to leave these two attributes until hit points are dealt with. On the other hand, it might be generated at this stage using the Muscle score as a guideline. Again, this is in the average range, so that a 3d6 roll of 10 is acceptable.

Power is an attribute which is characteristic of the Runequest family of games, to which Call of Cthulhu belongs, but which has a counterpart in few other RPG systems. However, since it governs the luck roll (POWx5) it can be related to the Gangbusters luck score. The Gangbusters luck check gives the character a 48% chance of a lucky break, and if this is equated to the Call of Cthulhu luck roll it gives a power score of $^{48}/_{5}$ = approx 10. In view of the very high Luck score in Gangbusters terms, it may be decided to adjust the Power score upwards, since luck rolls in Call of Cthulhu are generally higher; this is for the individual referee to decide, guided by his or her knowledge of both systems.

Size may be generated from scratch, since it has no equivalent in Gangbuster attributes, or it may be left until hit points have been dealt with (see Constitution above). Alternatively, the character's height and weight from the Gangbusters campaign rules may be taken into consideration.

Education must be generated from scratch in this case; there is no comparable or related attribute in the Gangbusters character to provide a guideline, and it is unrelated to the Intelligence score in Call of Cthulhu.

* * * *

A little more difficult are those systems which, like **The Fantasy Trip** or **Bushido**, give the player a fixed number of points to be allotted as she pleases between the character's attributes. It is not possible to break this down into a series of percentages, since it relies on choice rather than chance; instead, we need to use the concept of the Classic Person.

Originally developed in Bushido, this is an important concept. The Classic Man is Mr Average, totally unexceptional in any attribute or ability, and as such he can be used as a fixed point of reference from one system to another.

Where the attribute generation system is of the choice type, the Classic man has the fixed number of points distributed equally between all attributes, and where it is of the chance type, he has an average score in all attributes (determined by averaging the highest and lowest possible scores). Thus the classic man in Bushido has a score of 10 in all attributes (60 points allotted equally), while in the D&D game he has a score of 11 in all attributes ($3+^{18}/_{2}$ = 10.5, round up to 11).

With a little approximation, based on this fixed point, it should be possible to convert scores with sufficient accuracy for most practical purposes; you will at least be able to say whether a score is low, low-average, average, high-average, or high. Remember that total accuracy is never possible because the different RPG systems work in such widely differing ways.

The picture can be complicated even further by systems in which initial attribute scores are improvable, and rise as the character progresses. While a D&D character can have a maximum 18 in any attribute right from the word go, for example, it is unlikely that a Bushido character will have the maximum 40 for any attribute until a lot of great deeds have been done. Again, it is impossible to convert with total accuracy in such cases, but sufficient familiarity with both systems should give some clues.

To convert from an improvable-score system to a fixed-score system, take the original attributes with which the character started life, and it should be possible to convert these satisfactorily. The difference between original and current scores reflects advancement, and should be taken into account when converting skills (to be covered next month).

Converting the other way, from a fixed score system to an improvable-score system, presents more of a problem. In some cases it may be possible to assess the character's advancement, in terms of skill levels and so on, and use this to arrive at a 'theoretical' set of original scores for the improvable score system. These can then be adjusted upwards to an appropriate degree to reflect the character's current level of advancement. In all cases, one should go by 'feel', based on the Classic Man for each system and thorough knowledge of the mechanics of both games.

Graeme Davis

Next month: *Hit points, weapons and skills*

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As reviewed in

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Notices

Mutiny on the Eleanor Moraes

A STAR FRONTIERS®/Knight Hawks adventure, **Mutiny on the Eleanor Moraes** is an exploration and survey mission on an unknown planet that goes decidedly wrong. The party lands in a base ship, yet while the travellers are away from the ship their vehicle is incapacitated. They then face a gruelling march across country, to get back to the ship before a mad engineer can take off and leave them all stranded.

As is normal for STAR FRONTIERS adventures, the scenario is broken down into small sections. The initial problem is the march. This scenario has expanded the original rules on wilderness adventuring considerably. A very workable system has been created; not only do the characters have to contend with local fauna, but they can also suffer accidental injury when in rough terrain. Further, they only have a limited amount of equipment, and it is interesting to watch the resourceful party building their own gear out of the wreckage of the crash.

Mutiny has several drawbacks. Wilderness treks are in themselves quite boring for players. Clearly, the designer has attempted to liven things up with various planned encounters. However, in a situation such as this, casualties are bound to be high. The time limit means that the players are forced to sledge hammer their

A Pilots Guide to the Drexilthar Sector

Pilots Guide is a fully designed sub-sector of Gamelords/FASA's Reavers Deep sector for **Traveller**. The designer offers a one-and-a-half page essay on each of the planets in the sub-sector, together with astrographic data. There is a full political and historical background to the sub-sector. Furthermore the Guide is a useful aid in that many of Gamelords' scenarios are set in this region.

Of course Pilots Guide leaves a lot of work for the referee to do before one can use the supplement fully. For example the planetary maps would have to be produced. However it is well worth it. It could see a beginning referee off to a very good start; the actual design of one sub-sector is a lot of work for the uninitiated. Pilots Guide gives a good introduction to the Reavers Deep for an experienced group, a sector which is very different from those published so far.

Pilots Guide is a no-nonsense, straightforward Traveller supplement. It has little in the way of frills. However it is well produced and what it contains is good, sensible stuff. Pilots Guide is a welcome addition to any Traveller collection. It will be of use to the beginner and the veteran alike.

Stephen Nutt

Ascent to Anekthor & The Mountain Environment

These two additions to the Traveller range fit together; one cannot be played without the other. **The Mountain Environment** is a detailed system for mountain climbing, **Ascent** puts it into practice.

The mountain environment is good as far as it goes; the rules for climbing and the generation of a mountain face are very well conceived. However, it soon occurred to this reader, what is the point of all this detail? How many times will your Travellers have to scale a mountain face? The only times I have been able to use this are in crash situations or when small climbs are needed, usually skulking around doing a dirty deed. Apart from that one scenario where the players climb a mountain for fun, I don't think I shall ever use the full mountaineering rules.

Another point that has to be made is that the adventurers have to be skilled in mountaineering. It should be obvious to anyone that a novice climbing a mountain faces grave danger. Thus the travellers have to be led by at least one experienced player or NPC.

Ascent is the one occasion that the players climb a mountain for fun. It is set in Gamelords/FASA's Reavers Deep sector. However the adventure could easily be relocated in the referees own campaign. As a scenario Ascent is well produced, the concepts behind it are sound. The basic plot is a race between three teams, led by rival nobles, to get to the top of a mountain. Of course the task is not this simple, there are other sub-plots to break the monotony.

One main criticism is the mountain itself. The rules in Mountain Environment need a very detailed climbing pitch, that is what you get in Ascent, and it takes up almost half the book.

Gamelords are doing good work expanding rules for varous areas, eg mountains or underwater. However if this is of little use in the average campaign the work seems wasted.

Stephen Nutt

way through obstacles, which does not stimulate the imagination and is very dangerous.

Furthermore, the time limit may be too tight. The players have to average two kilometers per hour all the time, ie without sleep. The result is that the required finale, an assault on the Eleanor Moraes before she blasts off, may be difficult to achieve. It seems prudent then for the referee to treat the time limit with caution and stretch it forwards or backwards to allow the party to encounter the ship at the required point.

Eleanor Moraes is thus constrained by its very nature. If all goes according to plan, it will be exciting; if not, a great disappointment. However, if the players do succeed I would not like to be the engineer who shot them down in the first place.

Stephen Nutt

Product information

Mutiny on the Eleanor Mores *(£4.50) is a STAR FRONTIERS/Knight Hawks adventure from TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Road, Cambridge CB1 4AD*

Safari Ship *(£2.95) and* ***The Traveller Adventure*** *(£9.95) are GDW products, distributed in this country by Games Workshop, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10 6JP*

These addresses is for information only; all products should be at your local games shop.

Pilots Guide, Ascent, Mountain Environment *and* ***Wanted: Adventurers*** *are Gamelords products, who at time of going to press have no distributor in this country at present. For this reason no UK prices are currently available.*

Adventure 10: Safari Ship

Safari Ship is a hunting and exploration adventure set on an unpopulated world in District 268. The characters are crew and act as hunting companions for a rich patron in search of a rare animal.

The module is well laid out and good value for money. Hunting scenarios are easy to organise and run, and this will act as the archetype for such adventures. It shows the referee how to present such scenarios and how to break up the tedium of what is essentially a series of animal encounters.

Safari Ship also adds another starship to the referee's repertoire. This ship is a mustering-out benefit for the Hunters. It is well designed and very realistic, as are all GDW's starships. This kind of content gives a lot to the referee, who can use the ship many times after the initial adventure is over. The Safari Ship is a good means of travel, an ideal private run-around without the ties that merchant ships have.

The main strength of this scenario is its twist. What begins as a quite straightforward hunting adventure ends as a novel and unique Traveller experience. Players and referees will find this a pleasing surprise and a worthwhile end. As such Safari Ship really does cut new ground for the Traveller enthusiast.

Stephen Nutt

Wanted: Adventurers

Wanted: Adventurers, unlike **Safari Ship**, is not one adventure but a game aid outlining a series of 20 mini-scenarios.

Thus, Wanted: Adventurers is much like **76 Patrons**. However, it goes into much more depth, offering a two-page background on each job. Of course these mini-scenarios will need some work to expand them, if they are going to be done justice. In some cases this will not be a lot of bother, involving perhaps a few NPCs, a map or two. However some will need substantial work done on them, the mercenary scenario being the prime example, which offers an orbital assault in regimental strength.

Game aids like this are a great help to the Traveller referee. The very large scope of Traveller prevents a detailed coverage of every detail, and Wanted: Adventurers allows the referee to inject impromptu action into the campaign. The referee can mix new material with detailed, larger scenarios, that may be taking game months to accomplish. Most importantly, the referee has material at hand when the players decide to take an unplanned path, it adds another string to the referee's bow, allowing him flexibility in the face of an energetic party.

The scenarios contained in this play aid are only skeletons, yet it gives depth to the referee's campaigns and allows off-the-cuff activity in play sessions.

Stephen Nutt

The Traveller Adventure

The Traveller Adventure is the second in a series of large format presentations, containing a very important major plot which runs through the entire book, supplemented by many mini-scenarios. It is presented as a science fiction novel in a sense, but one in which you can role-play the major characters.

The basic plot is that the adventurers are the crew of a merchant ship, the *March Harrier*. They have to travel to finance the running of the ship and meet the heavy instalments that have to be paid to the ship's owners. Thus all of the adventure is at least tenuously linked to merchanting.

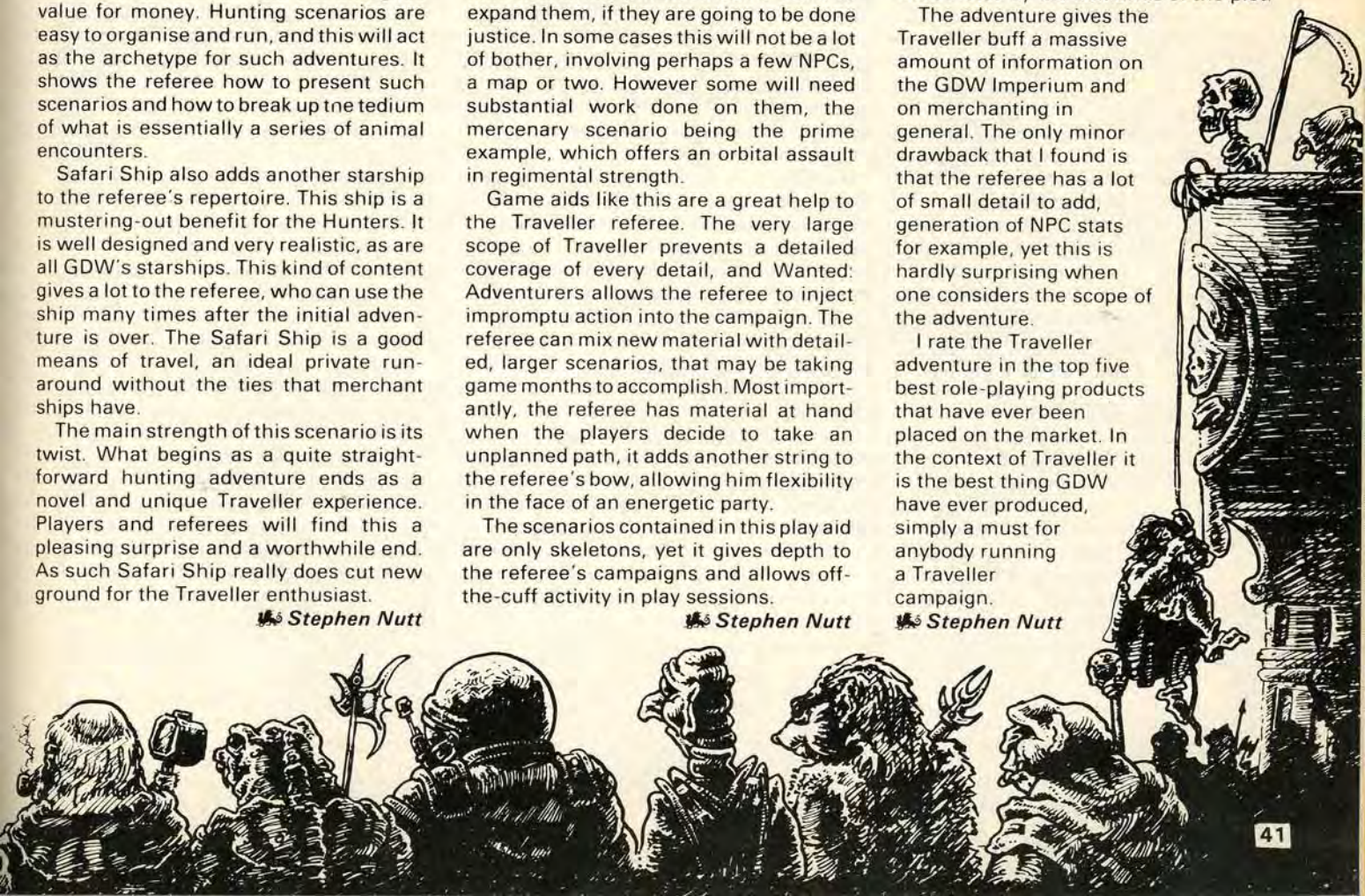
The way this is laid out and presented is superb. The adventure is long; it would take at least two years of game time to play, if played alone. If it were inserted into an existing campaign, this time could easily double or treble. The presentation is very good, the art work is amusing and in some cases striking.

The author has split the main plot into units to prevent the players being channelled. He links these sections by large numbers of patron scenarios. This means that each new stage of the adventure can be introduced smoothly when it suits the referee, and the referee is thus less constricted by the demands of the plot.

The adventure gives the Traveller buff a massive amount of information on the GDW Imperium and on merchanting in general. The only minor drawback that I found is that the referee has a lot of small detail to add, generation of NPC stats for example, yet this is hardly surprising when one considers the scope of the adventure.

I rate the Traveller adventure in the top five best role-playing products that have ever been placed on the market. In the context of Traveller it is the best thing GDW have ever produced, simply a must for anybody running a Traveller campaign.

Stephen Nutt



Notices & Games Review

Scouts, Book 6

Scouts is a long-awaited addition to the **Traveller** range, yet half the book was very much a disappointment. The supplement falls into two distinct parts, an expanded scout generation system and a new system for generating entire planetary and stellar systems.

The scout generation system should have done to the Scouts what **Mercenary** did for the Army and Marines, yet this is not the case. The system is flawed; the characters produced are gross in the extreme. The reason is simple. In the scouts it is easy to die and easy to get reinlisted. The former is a huge setback for a real individual, yet the player can merely create another set of statistics. Thus in the scouts you either die young or go a maximum term and muster out with a lot of skills. Now, I'm no killjoy referee who gripes at good characters, but these are too unbalanced. I shall not use the character generation system, except for preplanned NPCs.

The stellar generation system, however, is superb. At last you can generate an entire system, star, planetoid belts, gas giants and all. The system is easy to understand and is fast once one gets the hang of it. It allows a realistic approach to Traveller, and gives the referee more than that one isolated main world to use.

Furthermore, useful facts can be calculated for the planets involved: time of orbit, surface temperature, etc. The main impression that arises out of this section of Scouts is, however, the immensity of space. This will be especially helpful to referees who run campaigns in more settled areas; a fully designed system gives other places to hide.

It is hard to say that GDW have done more than half succeed with this one.

Stephen Nutt

Product information

***Scouts** (£3.95) is a GDW product, distributed by Games Workshop (address overleaf)*

***Forces of Fantasy** is a Warhammer supplement from Citadel Miniatures, Chewston St, Hilltop, Eastwood, Nottingham*

Addresses are for information only

The Drenslaar Quest

The Drenslaar Quest is a salvage mission set in the Reavers Deep sector of the **Traveller** universe. The basic plot is that a rebel ship carrying arms has crashed in shallow water, the characters have to recover the cargo before the enemy detects and arrests them.

The background of the **Quest** is revolution on a nearby planet, thus it is hard to move the scenario out of the Reavers Deep without unbalancing the situation.

The referee really needs the Gamelords supplement, **The Undersea Environment** to run this adventure. Yet the detail of the scenario is good enough to allow the referee to make up his own rules on the spot if need be.

The Quest offers players a unique challenge. Rarely are they asked to operate underwater for lengthy periods. Further there is ample opportunity for underwater combat in the best nature of the genre, fighting underwater fauna with knives, spearguns etc. The finale is suitably heroic for the most hot-headed of players, a gun fight between rival water craft.

The Quest also gives the referee another ship to use, this time a bulk freighter. It is well designed and superbly illustrated. The ship will continue to be a game-aid long after the players have finished Quest — a well presented and superbly conceived adventure. Top marks to the designer.

Stephen Nutt

Forces of Fantasy

Forces of Fantasy, first of many planned **Warhammer** supplements, is battling for a niche in what is fast becoming one of the most commercial and cut-throat of markets. Has it the quality to establish WH as a major rules system? Or will Citadel's brave venture become just another failure in the flotsam wake of the Big Three?

Presentation is encouraging. Careful layout, abundant illustration and colourful box art make for an attractive product. And with three booklets to tackle, you won't quibble about value for money... at least, not while you're in the shop... But what of the contents?

Booklet 1 is all you need to know to create your own 'fighting battalions'. Listings by race (Norse, Orcs, Wood Elves, etc) give you the basic natures, organisation and numbers of any army you might want to build from your Citadel Miniatures. Which is both good and bad. Ready-made battalions do minimise work, do aid game balance; but they impose unwelcome restrictions on the player too.

The booklet also provides three pages of rules extensions. *'Organising troops into Regiments'* tells you that you need between 12 and 20 figures to have even the smallest denomination of an army (a further £5 to £8 for Citadel!), and rules concerning Leaders, Standard-bearers, Champions and Musicians show you just four of the figures you'll have to buy. WH a miniatures advertisement? Never?!

Booklet 2 is much better. Beginning with various simplifications of standard Wargames/rpg rules (especially good is the Cavalry section), it continues with some figure-painting and tactics instructions, and concludes with *'Regiments of Renown'*, some specimen warrior-bands. Worth looking at, this.

But **No. 3** makes up for that! Entitled **Arcane Magics**, all it gives are a few magic items, a couple of new monsters, and an assortment of spells and magic weapons. Many magazines would give you more...

On the rules front, therefore, FoF falls just as flat as WH did. But in a sense that is irrelevant. WH sells because is is simple, and because it is nicely figure-oriented. And in that context FoF proves an excellent supplement.

So is WH here to stay? The answer is, of course, yes.

Richard Lee

GAME COMPANY

Clubs

On this page we will advertise your club, or appeal for other gamers to help found a new club in your area, free of charge.

FREEDOM WARRIORS are a group of people aged 15+ in the **WOODFORD GREEN** area, Chingford, who want to meet new role-playing gamers. No details here on what they play or how often — why not ring and ask? Tel: 01-527 7176 (evenings only).

In the **CHELMSFORD** area of Essex, an RPG club whose members concentrate on 'character interaction' and role playing are looking for new adventurers aged 15+. They play the AD&D game on Sunday afternoons at players' homes. They are willing to play different games. Contact N Shorter, 34 Aubrey Close, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 4EJ. Tel: 440342

The **ADVENTURERS of BERECINGUM** meet every Thursday evening at 7.30pm to play D&D or AD&D games. Membership is from £4 a year or 50p a night. Any person in the **DAGENHAM/ BARKING** area who is interested in playing RPGs should contact Pete on 01-591 3546.

Events

Organisers of role-playing events should take care to inform us at least TWO MONTHS in advance, for free publicity in these pages.
Write to IMAGINE magazine, The Mill, Rathmore Rd, Cambridge.

First in line, September 7-9, is **Mythcon**, which takes place at the Humberside College of Higher Education in Hull. Meet guest writers Anne McCaffrey and Stephen Gallagher, and hear another interesting lecture from Dr Jack Cohen. If last year is anything to go by, Mythcon is small and friendly, aimed at anyone interested in Fantasy and Science Fiction. Contact Penny Hill, 53 Glencoe St, Hull.

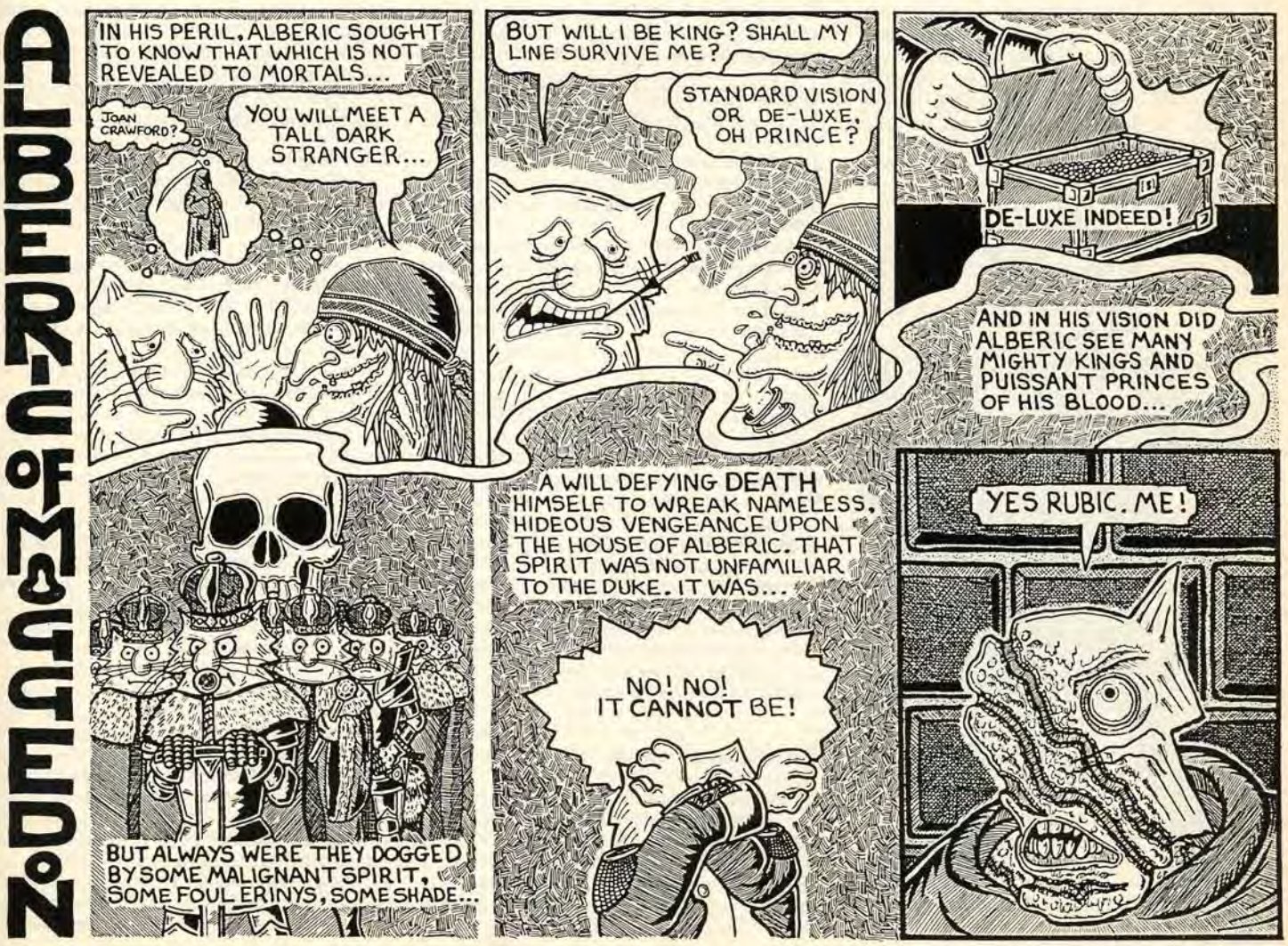
On September 23 will find **South East London Wargames Group Open Day** in Greenwich Borough Hall. There will be wargame demonstrations, participations, and modelling competitions. For more details, send SSAE to George Willoughby, 172 Minard Rd, Catford, London SE6.

ConQuest, an SF convention, will take place at the Ingram Hotel, Glasgow, from October 12-14 inclusive. Films, art room, writing competition, etc. Contact Pat Brown, 104 Pretoria Road, Patchway, Bristol BS12 5PZ to find out more.

Trekkies will want to know about their version of **Midcon** which is taking place in Leicester International Hotel, also on 12-14 October. All the usual Star Trek con features, but with limited membership to keep things intimate. Guests of Honour George (Lt Sulu) Takei and Bruce (Lt Kevin Riley) Hyde will be there. Money raised will be donated to the Downs Childrens Association. Contact Terry Elson, 8 Ennerdale Close, Oadby, Leicester LE2 4TN.

Novacon 14 will take place in Grand Hotel, Birmingham on November 9-11. Attending membership £6. Details from Ann Green, 11 Fox Green Crescent, Birmingham 27.

Advanced warning now of **Yorcon** which will take place next April 5-8 in — no, Leeds! The 36th Annual British Easter Science Fiction Convention, to give its full title, will be held at the Dragonara and Queens Hotels. Details later.


ALBERIC OF MAGUELONE
IN HIS PERIL, ALBERIC SOUGHT TO KNOW THAT WHICH IS NOT REVEALED TO MORTALS...
JOAN CRAWFORD?
YOU WILL MEET A TALL DARK STRANGER...
BUT ALWAYS WERE THEY DOGGED BY SOME MALIGNANT SPIRIT, SOME FOUL ERINYS, SOME SHADE...
BUT WILL I BE KING? SHALL MY LINE SURVIVE ME?
STANDARD VISION OR DE-LUXE, OH PRINCE?
A WILL DEFYING DEATH HIMSELF TO WREAK NAMELESS, HIDEOUS VENGEANCE UPON THE HOUSE OF ALBERIC. THAT SPIRIT WAS NOT UNFAMILIAR TO THE DUKE. IT WAS...
NO! NO! IT CANNOT BE!
DE-LUXE INDEED!
AND IN HIS VISION DID ALBERIC SEE MANY MIGHTY KINGS AND PUISSANT PRINCES OF HIS BLOOD...
YES RUBIC. ME!

AND THEN THERE WERE THREE

A Preview of the D&D® Companion Set Book 2: THE DUNGEON MASTERS COMPANION

by Frank Mentzer

Part 1: The Campaign

A D&D Campaign should reflect the preferences of both the DM and the players. It is important to remember, at this stage and in times to come, that a Campaign is only useful when it fulfils the purpose of the game: *having Fun*. An inexperienced DM can easily become caught up in the creation of a gloriously detailed medieval empire, only to find that the players want something simple!

A carefully designed Campaign can handle characters at all levels — possibly all played by the same players. If your experienced players have characters of various levels, be sure to have play sessions for each stage. Remember that characters should normally adventure with others of similar level.

Encourage your players to start other BASIC level characters. Many new details given in this set — including Unarmed Combat rules, new weapons, and so forth — can help even the most experienced player enjoy BASIC level play the 'second time around'. By alternating games for different levels of play, you can add more variety without adding more work.

Adventure Planning

After reaching 'Name' level, characters should gain a new level for every 3-8 successful adventures. More adventures can cause player frustration, fewer adventures can make the game too easy, and eventually boring. Details are given for designing adventures for specific characters and for high-level characters in general, including guidelines for monster and treasure placement.

Dominions

Whenever a piece of land is owned and ruled, that land is called a dominion. It may be of any size, and the ruler can be a PC or NPC. A dominion could be a small tower with an acre of land, or a mighty empire with millions of people.

The D&D fantasy world is loosely based on medieval Europe in the 15th century, before the invention of the printing press, but without firearms. The feudal system is used for government; persons of power claim large lands and lofty titles. Economics are primitive; most of the people are peasants, spending their lives merely surviving. There are five methods of obtaining a dominion:

1. Founding: To found a dominion, the PC finds an unclaimed wilderness area and creates a new and independent dominion.

2. Land Grant: An existing ruler may appoint a PC as ruler of a lesser dominion in the realm.

3. Colonization: A PC may be authorized by his or her liege to settle a new dominion in the liege's name.

4. Enfeoffment: A PC may be called on by others (rulers or peasants) to rule over *them*; this is called enfeoffment (*en-FEEF-ment*).

5. Conquest: Any PC may obtain a dominion by the oldest method in history: conquering it.

The Size, Location, & Population of each map hex (24 miles across) in a dominion are used to determine its resources, income, and other details.

The player keeps notes on the location, size, and population of the dominion, the number and type of Resources, the Income per month, and a total XP gained per month. The income is added to a dominion 'Treasury', kept by the character. If the dominion is part of a greater one, 20% of all income must be given to the higher ruler each month. In addition, 10% should be paid to the Theocracy (the church officials). Although this is not absolutely required, it is highly recommended; if not, no Cleric will be permitted to perform any service in that dominion (including all forms of curing!).

Other costs include, but are not limited to, the following: Advisers and other Officials; Entertaining Visitors; Holidays and Feasts; Troops; and Tournaments. Details are given for each of these. I think you'll enjoy the Tournament Jousting; that section was developed by Garry Spiegle, a long time Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) member.

Confidence Level

A dominion's Confidence Level is a measure of the satisfaction, among those ruled, with their ruler. It may be a number from 1 to 500. This figure is partly based on the ruler's ability scores, and varies by the ruler's actions. It is 'checked' at certain times (usually crises) to see if unusual happenings spring up — anything from good harvests (and bonus income) to riots and rebellion. Natural and unnatural events can affect the people's confidence, as well.

Titles

One notable characteristic of Medieval Europe was the proliferation of formal titles for nobility — ranging, in status, from Baron to Emperor. However, one title meant something different in each locale; England, France and other countries had (and still have) their own interpretations of each title. In addition, the tidy progression from Baron to Viscount, Count, Marquis, and Duke was nearly non-existent in history. In the COMPANION SET, we offer an orderly system, for playability, but it need not be strictly applied; it's helpful, but not mandatory. (My apologies to historians, but the titles are fairly accurately used, in terms of relative power. Feel free to have a character proclaim himself an Archduke if you wish!)

Mass Combat (The War Machine)

This is a system of game mechanics designed to resolve large battles in the game. It will handle any number of troops, and is recommended for any group of 10 or more. The entire system has four basic steps:

1. Calculate the BASIC FORCE RATING (BFR) of the troops.
2. Find the TROOP CLASS.
3. Calculate the BATTLE RATING (BR).
4. Determine and apply a COMBAT RESULT.

Steps 1, 2, and 3 are handled when a force is hire and outfitted; only step 4 is used when a battle occurs.

The Basic Force Rating (BFR) is the total of four factors: Leadership, Experience, Training, and Equipment. A fifth factor applies if the force is Special: elves, dwarves, or powerful monsters.

The Troop Class is a name (Untrained, Poor, Elite etc) determined by the Basic Force Rating, using a simple chart.

To find the Battle Rating, a bonus amount is added to the Basic Force Rating. This is based on a dozen special circumstances (force is mounted, has missile fire capability, magical power, superior movement, and so forth).

A 'Quick System' is also given, normally for use when monster troops are being created but also for player use if a simple method is desired.

When forces meet, the factors of Troop Ratio (the odds of one against the other, in sheer numbers), Morale, Environment, Terrain, Immunities (such as gargoyles to normal weapons) and Fatigue come into play. Each side ends up with a single number, representing the cumulative effect of all the above elements. The factor of luck is added, adding a d% roll to each figure, and the overall results are compared, using a Combat Results Table. The effects include killed, wounded, fatigue, holding the field of battle, and so forth.

Modifiers are also given for Siege situations, where the defender gains several advantages. A set of Optional rules for the War Machine

includes a 'Tactics' section, for players who wish to have a more direct effect on the battle; 'Mercy' rules, so that the victor may 'go easy' on the losing side, for less casualties; 'Character Actions', for use when PCs participate in battle (for Information gathering, Surprise attacks, 'removing' the enemy leaders, and ,of course, heroic PC actions.

The Multiverse

The next part of the booklet describes the planes of existence nearest to the Prime Material Plane. Descriptions and game mechanics are given for the Ethereal and four Elemental Planes. The Ether, being nearest, is fairly easily entered (by oil of etherealness, special armour, etc), but the Elemental Planes must be reached by way of a hole in the Plane — a 'vortex' — which leads to a connecting tube — a 'wormhole'. Elemental material is constantly flowing through permanent wormholes, both to and from the Prime, creating wind, ocean currents, volcanos, and occasional earthquakes.

Brief information is given on the Astral Plane and other dimensions, but these areas are left for detailing in the MASTERS Set.

And now for something completely different. The principles of Dominance and Opposition come into play during adventures involving elemental forces:

Air has dominance over Water.
Water has dominance over Fire.
Fire has dominance over Earth.
Earth has dominance over Air.
Air and Fire are in opposition.
Earth and Water are in opposition.

These principles have definite game effects on damage, reactions, spells, and so forth.

Magic in the Prime Plane is a highly developed art, but is based on that plane — a unique combination of all the elements. Thus, there are some slight changes in magical effects on the Elemental Planes, and some 'local' versions of magic therein, different from the Prime.

Here's a sample spell note:

Stone to Flesh: This spell affects material over which the caster has control, and turns it into living matter. Each Elemental Plane has a similar version, based on the same principles. Each Elemental version changes an element over which the caster has dominance into a living form; for example, the local version on the Plane of Water is **fire to water**. The reverse of the spell has similar local effects, but changes an elemental creature into non-living solid form. For example, on the Plane of Water, the reversed spell is **flesh to ice**.

Part 2: Procedures

As in the revised BASIC and EXPERT Sets, this section gives easy-to-find guidelines and rules for common game situations. The topics covered here include Ageing, Constructs (created monsters such as golems), Damage to Magic Items, Demi-Human Crafts, Maximum Character Hit Points, guidelines for use and control of Poison, various Reference Charts, effects of Speed differences (from *haste, slow,* etc), DM tips on handling the new weapons given in the set, and DM notes on Treasure handling — 'cashing' normal treasures, buying and selling magic items, and planning and placing treasure in dungeons.

Part 3: Adventures

Three scenarios are included, designed to illustrate the use of the new mass combat, unarmed combat, and Tournament (jousting) rules. Each provides 1 or 2 games sessions of play, and can easily be expanded for more.

Part 4: Monsters

It's been a challenge to design creatures for character levels 15-25. Some avenues were easily explored; for example, the dragons in the BASIC Set are the small ones. The 'large' and 'huge' versions are simply 1 ½ and 2 times their size, with some extra attacks (claw/claw/bite AND wing/kick/tail...) that a lot of gamers requested (you see, we DO listen to you!). Gargantuan monsters are just the usual ones (like carrion crawler and troll) but bigger, and have been very popular in the playtesting. In examining the Undead, I found several mythological niches that hadn't been explored, which gave rise to the Haunts (Banshee, Ghost, and Poltergeist), Phantoms (Apparition, Shade, and Vision), and Spirits (Druj, Odic, and Revenant). Beware — they're very, very nasty.

The monster section is in two parts. The first includes the above creatures, and others found in standard dungeon and wilderness adventuring. The second part describes creatures normally found only in other planes, mostly the elemental. In addition to the elementals themselves (which range up to 32 Hit Dice), there are 'good guy' and 'bad guy' races on each plane. Some of these life forms are very strange, but all are playable and interesting.

Part 5: Treasures

This should be the last 'normal' magic treasure section in the series; the MASTER Set will only describe artifact treasures. The charts given include slightly revised Treasure Type charts, new gems and jewellery tables (adjusted for higher level play), and lots of new magic items of all types. Here are some examples:

Keep an eye out for a **potion of luck**; it allows the player to choose the result of one die roll — like a saving throw, maybe?

Scrolls are not just read any more, and several are permanent. A **scroll of shelter** has a picture of a furnished room, with food; just hang it up and step right in.

No wands were added, but there are several new staves. Any of the 7 **staves of the elements** can be great for elemental adventuring, and lucky is he who finds a **staff of elemental power**, effective on all the elemental planes. Some new rods are useful in dominion rulership and war, and one is an extension of the old **snake staff**: the **rod of the wyrm**, which will produce a small dragon for your bidding.

Rings have always been popular, and there are a dozen new ones. Try the **ring of remedies** if your character is diseased, cursed, blind or poisoned.

Many people contributed ideas for miscellaneous magic items. So many good ones arose that they couldn't possibly have fit in the COMPANION Set. One much needed and included item is the **slate of identification**, for determining the names and effects of magic items. The **chime of time, eggs of wonder** and a few others were also included; guess what a **square wheel** does! With Gary's help, I wrote over 600 others for the **Dungeon Master's Book of Marvelous Magic**, a separate product coming next spring.

The weapon/armour/shield charts combine all sorts of effects. Powers, and strengths ('plusses') so that random rolls can produce nearly everything. The new armour and weapon types are included, of course. Your fighter may have a **haste** effect built into the armour (activated on command), or that shield might **absorb** energy drains. Missiles can **charm, dispel**, or even **blink** to miss friends — a useful weapon when you're in the back of the party. And swords can be found with various talents, like watching for enemies.

Other Notes

The fantasy world introduced in the EXPERT Set and now expanded in the COMPANION Set has become the basis for a large integrated design plan. The sets fit with all the 'B' and 'X' modules for a consistent overall 'world picture'. They still leave plenty of room for individual creativity, but provide a nice basis to work from, if you choose.

I'll be reviewing all future 'B', 'X' and 'CM' modules to be sure that they don't conflict with all this. They won't necessarily expand on or reinforce this world view; that could be to restrictive for creative designers. But they should be able to fit in without conflict.

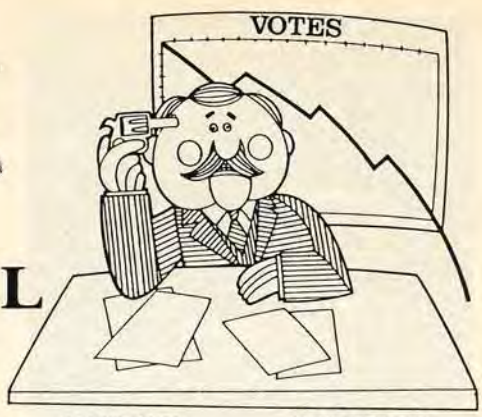
Watch for module CM-1 **Test of the Warlords** by Doug Niles. (If you read the first COMPANION Preview article, you'll remember that Doug did most of the work on the 'War Machine' mass combat system. I helped a little in planning the module, but he did most of the work.) This is a remarkable adventure, probably unlike any you've ever seen. The vast area on the map is divided into dominions — however

the players and DM want to do it! It can fit nearly any campaign; players make their own decisions, and the territory development will be different for every campaign. A clash of empires leads up to a glorious finale... but I won't give away any more details. Let's just say that it is a fleshed-out version of the bare bones guidelines in the set, showing you what a little creative effort can do. Follow that example, and you'll have a good campaign.

The D&D Companion Set is scheduled for release in Britain in September.

Frank Mentzer

The IMAGINE™ magazine GAMESFAIR POLL RESULTS



Here they are, the results of the most exhaustive poll of the gaming fraternity we've ever published; the new 'Oscars' of the role-playing scene! Shocking revelations, stunning turns of fortune — all this and more....

Having got past the big build-up, aimed primarily at those (a tiny minority of the British public) who did not buy, borrow or glance at a copy of #15, we can now get on with the business of publishing the results of the Poll we published then. You will remember that the delegates at the 1984 GamesFair convention at Reading were asked to vote for their favourites in 21 categories — some of which were not entirely serious — and that their votes were then used as the foundation of a system of nominations. Their selections were then tried out on the great voting public — ie, you. And just under 100 of you sent in your votes, a little short of the 1% return on circulation we had hoped for. We hope the rest of you are suitably ashamed.

Enough, let's get on. Remember that it is never too late to pass on your opinions about any gaming topic, so if something in the results amazes, horrifies or leaves you frothing with rage, drop us a line. We will show just the top three positions in most categories, except in those where the votes were very close for the minor placings, in which case a fuller list will appear.

BEST FANTASY RPG

1. AD&D	**67%**
2. D&D	10%
3. Runequest	6%
4. Call of Cthulhu	5%

Despite the results in other polls, and the vociferous opinions of **Runequest** fans, this can't have been a surprise, except, perhaps in the lead the Advanced game has over its equally best-selling cousin.

BEST SCIENCE FICTION RPG

1. Traveller	**43%**
2. Star Frontiers	17%
3. Gamma World	13%

Once unchallenged, **Traveller** faces stiffer opposition these days, but still comes out on top. With an uncertain future, however, will the loyalty of its players be maintained?

BEST RPG in any other category

1. Call of Cthulhu	**46%**
2. James Bond 007	33%
3. Top Secret	8%
4. Champions	4%

In a wide-ranging category like this, the performance of the two lead games is still remarkable, and very much deserved. With the proliferation of new titles, this category will be all the more interesting when compared with next year's Poll.

OVERALL BEST RPG

1. AD&D	**67%**
2. Call of Cthulhu	11%
3. D&D	10%

Fantasy RPGs still have the market in their grip, it seems. **Call of Cthulhu**, which straddles a number of categories — fantasy, horror, historical — in people's minds, has achieved widespread recognition now as the foremost challenger to the two market leaders.

BEST INDIVIDUAL SCENARIO for any RPG

1. S1 Tomb of Horrors	**25%**
2. Tizun Thane (WD18)	19%
3. I6 Ravenloft	15%
4. X2 Castle Ambreville	14%
5. EX1 Magic Mirror	12%
& I4 Pharoah	12%

Too close to mean much, this category's most interesting feature is the excellent position gained by a magazine scenario.

BEST BOARD/CARDGAME

1. Judge Dredd	**32%**
2. Chess	23%
3. Diplomacy	12%
& Illuminati	12%

Well, would you argue with him? An excellent result, and one of the few that shows the British making a substantial impact on gaming. A pity. Good to see that **Chess** can still attract a following.

BEST PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINE

1. Imagine	**46%**
2. White Dwarf	30%
3. Tortured Souls	20%

Best not to say anything about this.... Congratulations to Basil & Simon who have made **Tortured Souls** such a favourite so quickly.

BEST AMATEUR MAGAZINE

1. SEWARS	**54%**
2. Dragonlords	26%
3. Beholder	8%

Heavy polling from he Essex area didn't hurt **SEWARS** at all! Would **DL** have won had it still be going at the time the Poll was published?

BEST INDIVIDUAL ISSUE

1. SEWARS 17	**24%**
2. Tortured Souls 1	16%
3. Imagine 11	12%

Again, the Essex power-base tilted the balance, while cross-voting hurt **Imagine** and **White Dwarf**.

BEST FIGURES RANGE

Fantasy		other	
1. Citadel	**64%**	**1. Citadel**	**84%**
2. Chronicle	15%	2. Ral Partha	7%
3. Ral Partha	9%	3. Grenadier	3%

The most comprehensive victory of all. Citadel remain absolutely untouchable in this area.

BEST FILM

1. Raiders of the Lost Ark	**32%**
2. Return of the Jedi	27%
3. Life of Brian	18%

BEST BOOK/SERIES

1. Lord of the Rings	**67%**
2. Earthsea	11%
3. Covenant	7%

BEST SPORTING EVENT

1. Winter Olympics	**30%**
2. Superbowl	23%
3. FA Cup	22%

BEST MUSIC

1. Mike Oldfield	**25%**
2. Michael Jackson	20%
3. Beatles	16%

EVENT OF 1983

1. Christmas	**23%**
2. Birthday	20%
& Gamesday	20%

TURKEY OF 1983

1. Arthur Scargill	**39%**
2. The Thatchers	15%
3. Boy George	14%

The Open Heart Surgery® Game Award for the game most eagerly awaited in 1984

1. St Trinians Meet Mad Max	**26%**
2. Coronation Street™ RPG	23%
3. Oxford & Cambridge Battleboats	18%

The Finchley Central Award for the worst thing to happen to gaming in 1983

1. AD&D® Action Figures (the Bendy Ones)	**47%**
2. Sewars Didn't Fold	18%
3. New AD&D character classes	11%

The Tyburn Hall of Fame Award Who would you like to see hung in it?

1. Pete Tamlyn	**28%**
2. Lew Pulsipher	20%
3. Torville & Dean	18%
& Runic Press International	18%

The Finn mac Finn von O der Finnson Award for the most awful character name ever

1. Eric The Cleric (there's one in every party)	**31%**
2. Sir Duction of the Innocent	22%
3. Erasmus Music Centre	12%

That's it — the end of the first exciting **IMAGINE Magazine Gamesfair Poll**. All that remains is for 10 lucky winners to be drawn out of the hat:

David Mason, Bexhill, Sussex
Ken Lamb, Glenrothes, Fife
Robert Gillespie, Huddersfield, Yorks
M Probert, Sambourne, Warwicks
Nick Edwards, Bristol, Avon
Alf Fordham, Steatham, London
Chris Hodgson, Stockport, Cheshire
Peter Turner, Leamington Spa, Warwicks
Lee Peleteiro, Morecombe, Lancs
Tracey Scourfield, Over, Cambridgeshire

Fantasy Media

*Colin Greenland, author of **Daybreak on a Different Mountain** and co-editor of SF magazine **Interzone**, reviews the latest additions to the fantasy/SF media.*

Spock is dead. Trekkies everywhere saw his noble fall at the end of **Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan**, and shed a bitter tear. His coffin was ejected from the *USS Enterprise* to seek a final resting place on the new planet Genesis, transformed by the awesome invention of Dr David Marcus, son of Kirk. His daddy mourns. 'The death of Spock is like an open wound. It seems I have left the noblest part of myself behind on that newborn planet.'

Spock is dead. So why do the instruments of the *Enterprise* register a life-form in his sealed quarters? Why is Dr McCoy speaking in that funny voice? Why is the new Star Trek movie called **The Search for Spock**? (Paramount, PG) And why do the credits say 'Directed by Leonard Nimoy'? After his heroic self-sacrifice in *Khan* (and after seeing his autobiography firmly shelved under Science Fiction), Nimoy declared he was hanging up his ears and would never play the part again. A shrewd guess says that the producers made him the proverbial offer beyond refusal, and Nimoy agreed only on condition that they let him rule on both sides of the camera.

Well, given that it's his directorial debut, on the messianic story of Spock's resurrection from the dead, the movie is quite fun, and nowhere near the pompous pageant of self-aggrandisement I'd been dreading. The *Enterprise* is 20 years old, damaged, and headed for the Federation Starfleet scrapheap, and there is a certain poignant logic about this crew of ageing cronies — Bones, Sulu, Chekov and all — stealing her back to blast off on the forbidden venture to bring Spock back in time for the Vulcan ritual... before the Klingon warlord can steal the Genesis Device... and before the schizophrenic planet blows itself up. Gosh wow.

More golden oldies. BBC Enterprises have put **Dr Who: The Brain of Morbius** on video; and it is a real treat to see Tom Baker again, playing the part with the spirited intelligence that left the show when he did. This is the Frankenstein one, with Philip Madoc as the sinister Prof Solon, looking for a suitable head to his new mix-and-match body for the evil Time Lord Morbius: 'a head that shall soon command the universe'. While Solon and his big stupid servant Condo (Colin Fay) try to find a way to sneak the Doctor's head off his shoulders when he's not looking, Morbius's brain froths in its beaker like an impatient goldfish, and the Sisterhood of Karn chant 'Death-death-death' and wiggle their fingers in the air. Lovely Gothic nonsense, enlivened by spirited characterisation.

I'm pleased to say Precision Video took notice of my little moan in issue 15, and even more pleased to report that **The Last Unicorn** (Precision, U) is as good an animated fantasy as any I've seen. The drawing and some of the colour can be a bit twee, but Rankin and Bass signed up an all-star cast of voices (Mia Farrow, Jeff Bridges, even Christopher Lee) and were wise enough to get Peter Beagle to write the screenplay from his own novel. Beagle has kept all the good bits, including the jokes, the smart, wry dialogue, and many bursts of brilliant imagination, here captured in stylish special effects: the attack of the Red Bull, all made of fire; the binding of all the lost unicorns into the foam of the sea.

Back in print from Penguin is Philip K Dick's brilliant **Time Out of Joint** (£1.95). The year is 1959. Ragle Gumm lives in the ordinary little Wyoming town of Kemmerer, with his sister and her husband. Every day he works out the puzzle in the local paper, 'Where Will the Little Green Man Be Next?'. And every day he wins. He doesn't even have to go to work. Everything is just fine, except that he keeps having hallucinations of things that aren't where they should be: light switches, soda fountains. Then he finds an old phone book, full of numbers and places that don't exist, and a magazine with a photo of a famous film star nobody in Kemmerer has ever heard of, called Marilyn Monroe... As usual, Dick's deadpan investigation of a paranoid world reveals more than a little of the unreal dimensions of our own 'safe' environments.

A Rose for Armageddon (Sphere, £1.75), is one of the most unusual SF fantasies I've read in a long while. By Hilbert Schenck, a new writer sometimes reminiscent of Ursula Le Guin, it is set in a near-future America shuddering into economic and social collapse, where university professors are throwing bricks from the picket lines. It is told as the experiences of two 60-year-old academics who simply have to keep on working at their research project. But there is nothing elderly or dry about this story, which not only evokes a new science with perfect clarity and conviction, but also radiates with the enigmatic light of an elusive vision. Something happened to Elsa Adams and Jake Stinson, years ago, on Hawkins Island. Did they have a tender loving encounter? And if so, why can't they remember it? The solution of the mystery twists all of space and time into a new and startling pattern.

Colin Greenland

*On page 16 of this issue you can find a short story by Colin, set in the same world as **Daybreak on a Different Mountain**.*

Next month Colin will be back on this page with more media reviews.

Letters

Welcome to the letters page, the place where British gamers get the opportunity to speak their mind. Actually, a few more of you need to do that in time for next month, since ***VOP*** *seems to be making a take-over bid.* ***IMAGINE magazine (letters),*** *The Mill, Rathmore Road, Cambridge CB1 4AD is the address for all you budding correspondents.*

Some people insist that letters pages are always boring, because everything gets cut down to the minimum, and nobody says anything interesting, and those who do find their letters don't get printed. I expect that this is the last thing that will be said in certain circles about the following letter, which is printed almost in its entirety. So touchy is the subject matter, that I'm going to break the conventions this column has developed, and preface the letter with a few remarks. Although this lad/lass appears to be a gamer, the views expressed do not ***in any way*** *express the views of gamers generally, and certainly are the antithesis of the policy of TSR and IMAGINE magazine. But free speech is what it's all supposed to be about, so....*

(name and address supplied): Concerning the letter in issue 16 from Andrew Rilston, it is painfully obvious that he knows nothing about 'the **real** occult', or 'devil worship', as he phrases it.

First, the 'real occult' has nothing to do with 'Devil worship', and the worship of Demons is not Satanism, which is what I think he implies by 'Devil worship', but is, in fact, Witchcraft. Even then, they do not really 'worship' demons.

I play many game systems, 11 in all, both fantasy and science fiction, and if anybody thinks that the 'spells' in the D&D game are even remotely similar to occult magic, they need their heads examined. Still, it gives the Church and Moral Pillars of Strength in our crumbling, evil (Ha!) society something else to complain about, and bring themselves into the public eye (like Mary Whitehouse, who claims to have a direct line to God).

Neither the Occult or Fantasy Magic are 'evil' in any sense, and should not be considered to be so. One suggestion to Mr Rilston might be to battle against Devils/Demons/Daemons rather than just complaining about them. Remember, a balance of good and evil must be maintained, and without evil, good cannot exist.

I find this line of thought more ludicrous than dangerous, but clearly Christians of a rather less liberal persuasion than Andrew Rilston might disagree. If you want to know where we stand, the following sums it up:

Ian Flain, Stevenage, Herts: It seems to me that most DMs' games are set aeons ago, in 'lands that have long since dropped into the seas'. In this case, Christianity as such doesn't exist in the game world. Andrew Rilston would then be quite right about removing Christian mythology, such as Devils and lead figure of clerics and paladins holding crucifixes, from fantasy role-playing games.

My advice to a Christian who objects to D&D is to leave its players alone and take up **Traveller**.

That's a heavy price to pay for faith, Ian. I think there can't be much more to be usefully said about this line of argument now. All that Ian says above can equally be applied to the other religions in the ***DEITIES & DEMIGODS®*** *Cyclopedia. The sooner that particular text is revised the better, I'd say, although by now, I hope, most of you will have evolved a less controversial and more fantastic mythology for your own campaigns.*

Nathan Sharp, Huddersfield: How about doing a feature on the killing-off of characters?

Great idea! I've just finished wiping out a group of characters play-testing UK6. It was ever so easy. First, I just....

I find it difficult to handle players who have just lost a character they have been using week-in-week-out for over a year (our group has banned **rings of regeneration**).

Oh, ***that*** *kind of article. I personally recommend Kleenex, but if anyone has a better idea, then IMAGINE magazine has a reader waiting to hear from you!*

Here's somebody else with a problem.

Anthony Lloyd (alias Balzac (Mad Dwarf) Bloodletter): I have been playing AD&D for some time now, and, as very veteran player knows, there comes a time when new players need to be sought out and introduced into the mystical realms of fantasy role-playing. The introduction of novices into the game can be a very amusing experience for all concerned. Another longtime player and I explained the rules to a few friends who then went off and did in a few orcs and an uruk. The conversation then went as follows:

Snowy: "Let's hide the orcs so no-one finds the bodies and suspects foul play." (The rest of the party agreed) "I'm dragging this one to those rocks."

DM: (Seeing that 'this one' was the uruk) "That's a bit heavy to drag one-handed."

S: "OK, I'll use two hands."

DM: "Right. What are you doing with the torch in the meantime?"

S: "Hmmm.... I'll hold it in my mouth!"

DM: (Coughs, gasps) "Er, right then." (Rolls d8, 5 comes up) "You take five points of burning damage."

S: "Burning damage?"

DM: "Yes.... the torch is burning, you know."

S: "Burning?! I though it ran on batteries!"

I know how you feel. Don't be too hard on the poor lad, though. You can always assume that just because a player is dumb enough to suggest that his character should put a flaming torch in his mouth, that character needn't be. That is the only thing that has kept a few of my creations going!

P McKeown, Co Down: As I have missed so many previous issues, I would like to obtain a few of them. But there is something that really puzzles me; why are the back issues more expensive than the current issue? If you can afford to maintain the same low price for an even larger magazine, why do the back issues cost £1.50?

Back in the bad old days I would have had to explain that the problem with back issues is that we paid for them 1, 3, 12 – or even 16 months ago, now, and in the interim they have been taking up warehouse space, and when we send them out to you, someone has to handle that one order instead of several dozen through a shop.... Forget all that. Just drop your eye to the foot of the page, and you'll see that the ever-foolishly-generous Don Turnbull has dropped the price of a back issue to £1.

Next issue: The response to the Egypt special. A few 'regulars' seemed to be very cool

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on the idea of the Egyptian culture vis-a-vis the AD&D game, saying that the two didn't mix. Anyone out there feel differently? I was quite surprised by that reaction myself, since the Advanced game is usually described as being spread too thinly over all kinds of cultures. As always, we would like to hear what you think.

Mind you, a few potential writers might be put off when they hear what can happen to anybody daring to be critical about certain parts of the magazine:

The Palace Moggedon: Sir, It is deeply insulting for an established Hero like myself to be called a 'waste of space' by an imaginary being. I dispell Jeremy Nuttall herewith.

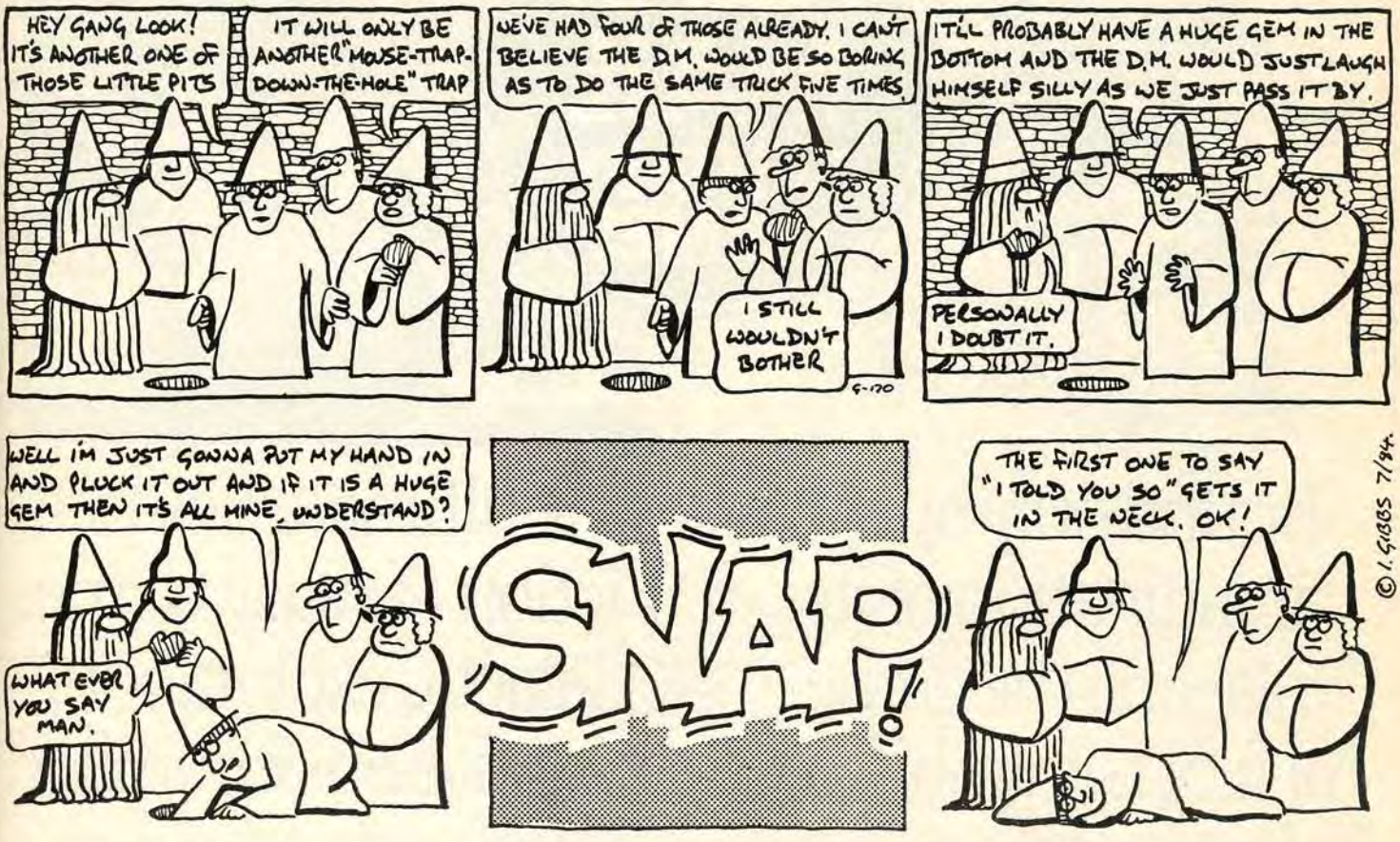
RUBIC

Rubic, Of MOGGEDON, King.

Letters edited by Paul Cockburn

VOP

by Ian Gibbs


HEY GANG LOOK! IT'S ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE LITTLE PITS
IT WILL ONLY BE ANOTHER "MOUSE-TRAP-DOWN-THE-HOLE" TRAP
WE'VE HAD FOUR OF THOSE ALREADY. I CAN'T BELIEVE THE D.M. WOULD BE SO BORING AS TO DO THE SAME TRICK FIVE TIMES
I STILL WOULDN'T BOTHER
G-170
IT'LL PROBABLY HAVE A HUGE GEM IN THE BOTTOM AND THE D.M. WOULD JUST LAUGH HIMSELF SILLY AS WE JUST PASS IT BY.
PERSONALLY I DOUBT IT.
WELL I'M JUST GONNA PUT MY HAND IN AND PLUCK IT OUT AND IF IT IS A HUGE GEM THEN IT'S ALL MINE, UNDERSTAND?
WHATEVER YOU SAY MAN.
SNAP!
THE FIRST ONE TO SAY "I TOLD YOU SO" GETS IT IN THE NECK. OK!
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IMAGINE magazine #19

Pelinore; **Geas**, ideas for using the spell; **FRP in the Remedial Classroom**, an impression on one use of role-playing in schools; **The Private Lives of NPCs**, Katino returns with another look at what the monsters are up to between visits; **Games Without Frontiers**, part 2; **Stirge Corner**; **Fantasy Media**; **Phalanx**; news, reviews, ideas, letters.... how do we get it into 56 pages?

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A page for the not-so-experienced adventurer

by Roger Musson

Why nine separate alignments in the AD&D® game? Is it not rather complex? It helps to look at the origins, Law, Chaos & Neutral, in Michael Moorcock's novels.

Once upon a time, I encountered a couple of people playing the **D&D®** game who had never played it with anyone else before, and thus had to learn everything from the book. Also, since there were only two of them, they had to arrange things so that one would be DM and the other would play the entire party, consisting of 'his' character (a cleric) and a number of retainers. Not an ideal way to play, but better than nothing if there is no alternative. So I agreed to take part in the game, and produced a character from another campaign, one with a goodly number of magic items to keep the forces of evil at bay.

All went smoothly until the end of the expedition, when the cleric turned on my character and said 'Right, let's have some of those magic items or I'll set my heavies on you'. 'Wait a minute,' said I, dumbfounded, 'you guys are meant to be Lawful Good' (there had been plenty of evidence of this previously). 'Oh' said player and DM virtually in chorus, 'does that actually mean something?' 'Indeed it does,' said I, and gave them a quick lecture on the nature of alignment.

It seems that alignment is one area that newcomers can find very confusing, so I intend to spend a little space discussing it. The first and most basic point, for those like the two players mentioned above, is that alignment is more than a label. When one chooses the alignment of a character, it means much more than being able to pick up swords with the same label and wishing to duff up those with a different label. It is a commitment to a certain set of principles which will guide all the behaviour of that character. It is a commitment sufficiently rigid that if a player's actions are not in accord with it, the DM is empowered by the rules to punish the character in question quite draconianly.

Thus, if characters supposedly Lawful Good start robbing their fellows, or if characters supposedly Chaotic Evil consistently pass up all opportunities to advance themselves at the expense of the others, they are acting out of alignment and suffer the consequences. Note that it is not good practice for the DM to say 'you may not do that because it's against your alignment' — the DM should only ever actually forbid those actions which are physically impossible. He may warn players (if he likes) that their projected course of action is hardly compatible with their alignment. If they persist in it, he may decide, depending on the magnitude of the offence, and taking previous misdemeanours into account, that they have actually forsaken their alignments and inform them of the fact, exacting appropriate punishment if he wishes to do so.

But why Law and Chaos, and nine separate alignments, and character alignment graphs and the rest of the paraphernalia? Is it not all rather complex?

To understand the system of alignments, it is necessary to look at it historically. In the D&D® game, there are only Law, Chaos, and Neutral. And this particular triad was borrowed from the writings of Michael Moorcock — in particular the Elric of Melnibone books, though some of his other fantasies use the same concept. This mythology is something as follows: the world is a battleground between two sets of powerful forces — Law and Chaos. The adherents of the former believe that the ideal world is completely regulated, ordered and structured; the adherents of the latter believe that the ideal world is totally free, fluid and changing. Sandwiched between are the Neutrals, who believe that total Law is arid and sterile, that total Chaos is insupportable, and that the ideal is a mixture between the two, in other words, balance. Since the aims of the Lawfuls and the Chaotics are completely incompatible, the two are constantly at battle, while the aim of the Neutrals is to stop either side from winning. As long as Law and Chaos are both present in the right proportions, a world exists where progress is possible.

It is an interesting and fertile idea, and it is also a very good basis for a role-playing campaign. But to understand how the ideas of Law and Chaos interact under this set-up, it is essential to read some of the Moorcock novels in which the theme is used (one of the best being **Stormbringer** in which the final battle between the two sides brings about Ragnarok).

However, someone evidently unfamiliar with the Moorcock books made at some stage the perfectly valid point that Law is not the same as Good, and Chaos is not the same as Evil. And, of course, most fantasies apart from Moorcock, from the Arthurian legend up to **White Gold Wielder**, run on the lines of Good versus Evil. So to allow for this, Good and Evil were patched into the alignment system with the result that we now have a grand mix of nine different possible combinations. The disadvantage of this, besides being complex and looking daunting to the newcomer, is that it doesn't really tie in with anything. Is **Lord of the Rings** a story of the struggle between Chaotic Good and Lawful Evil, or Lawful Good and Chaotic Evil? Well, it's about Good and Evil, really, and Law and Chaos don't come into it.

The advantage is that it is flexible; as in most aspects of the D&D games, you are free to pick and choose. If you were to run a campaign based on the Elric books, you could easily ditch Good and Evil and go back to the old three-way alignment. Or you can, as I have done in the past, use a three-way alignment system of Good, Neutral and Evil. If you do not want to use a background to your campaign that already has its own alignment built in, as with Moorcock and Tolkien, then one can easily construct an appropriate mythology to fit the nine-way system and proceed from there.

Roger Musson

Roger will continue with the subject of alignments next month.

Previous beginners' articles★ can be found back issues of IMAGINE magazine, available at a cost of £1.00 from ***Dept IMBI, TSR UK Ltd.***

★ #1, 2 & 3: General introduction to rpgs; #4 & 5: Advice for beginning DMs; #6 & 7: Hints on staying alive & completing a mission; #8: Treasure*; #9: Monsters*; #10: Allocating dungeon treasure and monsters*; #11: Time & motion*; #12: Role-playing; #13: Role-playing for DMs*; #14: NPCs*; #15: Mapping*; #16: Scale & the use of miniature figures; #17: DMing equipment* *mainly for DMs.*

'Zine & the Art of Editing

Mike Lewis of DragonLords concludes his advice to would-be fanzine editors

Last month Mike explained how to go about setting up a fanzine and getting it printed; here he resumes with suggestions about distribution and 'life after issue one'...

Distribution

Okay, so you now have 200 copies or so of your first issue sitting in a box in the living room and providing a nice bed for the cat; what do you do to get rid of the damn things? Well, here are a number of ways (for the zines that is, don't ask me about cats):

1) Selling through the post: Fairly obviously, before you can sell anything through the post to people, they need to know that you exist. Unless your budget includes buying prime time advertising on ITV, this means putting adverts in prozines and fanzines. The ad doesn't have to be anything very special, just an announcement of your first issue, with a few details of content, and perhaps systems covered and the price by post and (of course) your address.

The other way of receiving publicity for postal sales is to send out review copies. Both **IMAGINE** and **White Dwarf** magazines review fanzines, and most fanzines will as well. Don't forget **20 Years On** either, who should always receive a copy of your first issue — indeed, of every issue you produce.

2) Selling at conventions: At a convention, you stand to make a larger profit than elsewhere due to direct sales without postal costs or the shops' discounts. You can usually leave copies of your fanzine on the fanzine stand, the organisers of which are extremely helpful and intelligent people (oh yes, I am one of them!). They will sell the zine for you, and return all the money at the end of the day. It is a good idea to launch the first issue of your zine before a major convention such as Games Day, as first issues do tend to generate some interest ('Not another bloody fanzine!') and thus sell fairly well.

Also, at conventions you can approach shops and deals with them directly, without the hassle of writing letters or 'phoning. This brings us to...

3) Shop sales: The unique thing about FRP fanzines, unlike most other types, is that they have a relatively large market outlet in the form of games and hobby shops. Most shops will take a few copies

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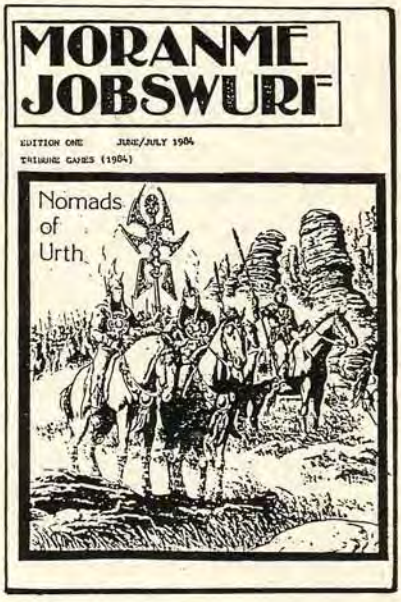
Press Cuttings

We have only two FRP fanzines to hand this time — are they really that thin on the ground at the moment, or are the editors just naturally shy and retiring? Still, **MISERS HOARD** 7 is another good issue from one of the UK's leading fantasy zines. Though perhaps lacking in a little character, MH still comes up with lots of good material. It has plenty of discussion, plus articles for the **AD&D, RQ** and **Traveller** games. **THE JOURNAL OF THE SENSELESS CARNAGE SOCIETY** 6 has another superb Stord cover, and shows that it is more than just another pretty name. They seem to be having problems at the moment, with three out of four editors dropping out in the first year! Scenarios for **Chivalry & Sorcery** and **Traveller** feature strongly, as well as an unarmed combat system for the AD&D game. Both zines are worth trying at least once.

By comparison with this dearth of FRP zines, postal gaming zines seem to be on the increase; presumably because they are so easy to produce. Most just have game reports and general free-form chat, rather than the researched articles which feature in their role-playing cousins. **MORANME JOBSWURF** 1 is a new pbm magazine from Tribune Games. Recognise the title? Of course you do, it was the name of that much-maligned giveaway in #12 of **IMAGINE** magazine. MJ is intended to be a forum for Tribune's own games, and anyone else who has a game to promote. So, if you run an amateur or professional pbm game, you can publicise it here. The games on offer in the zine include a very interesting fantasy game **Nomads**, as well as the usual **Diplomacy**, etc. **THE GUILDER** 2 is rather cheaper than MJ and has the distinction of coming from Ireland. It is clearly early days yet, as the magazine doesn't look too great, but there is plenty of enthusiasm involved and plenty of games on offer. **Dr Who, Traveller** and the **AD&D** game are featured.



MAJOR THOMPSON LIVES IN FRANCE is the new title that Andy Blakeman has chosen for the second issue of his chatzine. I'm not sure what to make of it — games are offered and there is plenty of amusing chatter. And how can you not like a zine which is duplicated on green foolscap paper?! **THE WIND'S SIXTH QUARTER** is Graham Staplehurst's latest communication to the world. It has his comments and reactions to zines, films and frp. While **L'ANNO DEL TOPO** 3 continues Ian Marsh's Year of the Rat chatzine, with Italian recipes, it also has games, an excellent piece on **Squad Leader**, and a free Tarot card, which Ian says has caused a lot of people to dive into reference books to discover what their card means!

SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL 5 is a newszine which endeavours to cover the games scene with a typical emphasis on the postal gaming hobby. The main news in this issue is about the International Subscription Exchange. This is an excellent idea which enables you to subscribe to US zines without all the hassle of getting dollars, etc. **INFLAMMATORY MATERIAL** 5 sees Simon in a state of post-exam shock, and wondering whether to turn the whole zine over to music or not. IM features a lot of music coverage as it is, so it may be that the change is

at least, not because they make any great profit out of them, but because they themselves are games fans, and willing to support fanzines.

Most shops require 35% discount off the cover price of the fanzine, and you will have to pay postage costs of the copies to the shops. You have two alternatives here; either you can approach the shops yourself, in which case I'd recommend that you write to some ten or fifteen shops initially which are likely to stock fanzines, and send each a sample copy and a covering letter. In these economic climes it is advisable to enclose a SSAE for their reply. The other alternative is to take advantage of the Zine Service. This organisation run by John McKeown of **Miser's Hoard**, exists to promote fanzines and to enable a large number to be available from one source. When you have produced your first issue, write to John at 22 Hall Lane, Upminster, Essex RM17 1AF and ask for up-to-date details. There is also a Fanzine Service Newsletter, which details all the services provided and which acts as a forum for discussion of fanzines and ways of helping them. It is available from Steve Norledge, 75 Hawkhurst Way, W Wickham, Kent, for an SSAE.

After the first issue

Having started your fanzine, you now have to keep it running, fairly regularly, with a decent standard of contents. If it is bi-montly, it is a good idea to start work on the second issue almost immediately; if quarterly, you will have a little time before the next issue to decide what the reaction to your fanzine has been, and whether it is advisable to change the contents style or not.

The first hurdle to be faced is issue three. There does appear to be a definite 'issue 3 syndrome', as a lot of fanzines collapse then. Once this point has been passed, zines tend to become more independent, with contributions and subscriptions coming in.

Note that the turnover of a lot of the larger zines is well over £1000, so it is advisable to keep the magazine money separate from your own. When — let's face it as fanzines don't last forever — you fold the magazine, you should be in a position to pay back all the subscriptions currently outstanding. Unless you decide to disappear into obscurity with the money, like a certain semi-prozine editor, of course — but this doesn't do a lot for your reputation.

Alternatives

While this article has assumed that you will be using the services of a local printer and producing an FRP fanzine, much of the advice is applicable to other situations. Other production methods are available — you could hand-write each issue (only advisable on small print runs!) or buy your own duplicator. If you intend to try the latter approach, I recommend that you have a look at **Greatest Tips**, the Novice Editor's Package for postal gaming. It has a lot of useful hints and tips on getting a duplicator and using it, and is available from Paul Segal, 29 Heath Hurst Road, London NW3, for £1. If you intend to hand-write the whole zine, I'd recommend you to see a psychiatrist...

Conclusions

I hope these articles have given you some idea of the methods and problems of producing a fanzine. Remember that editing a fanzine should be fun, and have confidence in what you are producing. If you don't take yourself or the magazine too seriously, you'll find that editing a fanzine can be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding of hobbies.

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inevitable. **HOPSCOTCH** 42 continues to offer an incredible variety of postal games and openings, even to the point of including the Zine Poll game! **GALLIMAUFRAY** 7 is the product of Steve Doubleday, a man responsible for vast numbers of game variants. Needless to say, the zine covers some of these, as well as a lot of SF books. **ODE** 56 comes in changed format — A5 photocopy instead of A4 mimeo. The content is mainly Diplomacy, but also include some chat and variant rules. **MAD POLICY** 97 offers Diplomacy, **Jotto**, letters and the Out-of-the-Archives series of reprinted articles. At the moment, this is covering the history of the hobby.

ACOLYTE 58 features the new BMW K100 road test on its cover, as well as inside. There's also Pete's new typewriter. Somewhere amid all this, there is still one of the best places to read mature discussion of aspects of role-playing games. **NMR!** 51 follows up the previous issue's amazing cassette with a supposedly 3D cover. Can't see it myself. It had members of the IMAGINE magazine staff peering through pairs of polarised sunglasses for the best part of half an hour.... There's the usual large lettercolumn and another of NMR!'s guides to the waterways. **TAKE THAT YOU FIEND INTERNATIONAL** celebrates its coming-of-age with a cover that claims that it insults or attacks just about everyone in the hobby. Inside though, it is still the same old lovable zine with **En Garde**, **Title Bout** and **Crimson and Gold** on offer. **GREATEST HITS** 117 continues the grand tradition of ages past, and it seems that new games like **Mogul** and **Trainer** are actually going to start. Finally, we complete this race around the world of postal gaming with **WALAMALAYSIA GAZETTE** 44, which offers cheap and reliable Diplomacy, as well as reprinted articles on computing.

The latest fruits of membership of the British Science Fiction Association are **VECTOR**, which carries a feature on writer James Blish, including previously unpublished work; **PAPERBACK INFERNO**, which reviews new paperbacks; and a much-altered **MATRIX**, with a new editor bringing fanzine reviews, and news of books and films. **CEREBRO 20** is the publication of the lively X-Men fanclub, and is packed with articles and discussion pieces on the Marvel characters, and comics in general. The club as a whole offers a friendly atmosphere, and is an excellent way to break into comics fandom. I can say that with hand on heart because it was Cerebro 13 which did just that for me.

Last up, just like the quirky items they stick on the end of news broadcasts, we have **PILAND BUGLE**. The **Imagination Machine** section of IMAGINE magazine used to bring the latest outpourings of a computer games software house called Automata to your door; well, Piland Bugle is the newsletter of the Pimaniacs fanclub, and carries cartoons, competitions and news about their inspired range of games. Miss it if you dare.

Zines reviewed by Mike Lewis

Contacts

Miser's Hoard, (60p), Richard Osborne, 47 Trent Avenue, Upminster, Essex; **The Journal of the SCS**, (50p), Simon Hartley, 5 Burgh Heath Rd, Epsom, Surrey; **Moranme Jobswurf**, (£1), Tribune Games, 19 Cosford Drive, Netherton, Dudley, W Midlands; **The Guilder**, (30p), Damien Madalena, 230 Tate's Avenue, Belfast; **Major Thompson Lives In France**, (35p), Andy Blakeman, Springfields, Lassington Lane, Highnam, Gloucester GL2 8DH; **The Wind's Sixth Quarter**, Graham Staplehurst, 277 Stoke Newington Church Street, London N16 9JH; **L'Anno Del Topo**, Ian Marsh, c/o 27-29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10 6JP; **School for Scandal**, (20p), Trevor Mendham, 53 Towncourt Crescent, Petts Wood, Kent PR5 1PH; **Inflammatory Material**, (40p), Simon Billenness, Falkner/Eggington Court, Loughborough University, Leicester LE11 3HT; **Hopscotch**, (40p), Alan Parr, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring, Herts; **Gallimaufray**, (50p), Steve Doubleday, 28 Wren Wood, Welwyn Garden City, Herts; **Ode**, (40p), John Marsden, 17 Church Road, St Leonards, Hastings, E Sussex TN37 6EF; **Mad Policy**, (30p), Richard Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6PG; **Acolyte**, (45p), Pete Tamlyn, 2 Poplar Road, The Coppice, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5BN; **NMR!**, (45p), Brian Creese, 256 Canbury Park Rd, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 6LG; **TTYF International**, (35p), Kevin Warne, 48 Boscombe Ave, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1JG; **Greatest Hits**, (50p), Pete Birks, 65 Turney Rd, London SE21 7JB; **Walamalaysia Gazette**, (20p), Dave Thorby c/o 200 Lavender Hill Rd, Enfield, Middx; **BSFA**, (£7 annual membership), Sandy Brown, 18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre, Lanarkshire G72 9NA; **Cerebro**, (£4.50 for 6), Geoff Willmetts, 74 Gloucester Road, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 6EA; **Pimaniacs**, (£5), Automata UK, 27 Highland Road, Portsmouth, Hants PO14 9DA.

CHAIN MAIL by Brian Creese

A bi-monthly feature about the postal gaming hobby

THE COMMERCIAL PBM GAMES

Episode 3: The Morning After

In issues 14 and 16, I explained that I had enlisted the help of a few friends to play a selection of play by mail (pbm) games, and told readers a little about each of these games. This month I sum up the feelings of the team on the individual games and the whole world of pbm.

Undoubtedly **CRASIMOFF'S WORLD** is a highly worthy game. It has been running for several years now and has a large number of players. Compared to others of its kind it is not expensive and it goes out of its way to encourage communication between players. I found the initial scenario interesting, and the world lived up to this promise. Adjudications generally take about 8 to 10 days to appear and the fact that they are handwritten merely testifies to the immense amount of effort put in by the GM. So, with its regular newsletter, Crasimoff's World is a friendly, efficient and relatively cheap game to play, and if you wish to try a commercial pbm game with a distinctly D&D® game-ish flavour, I would unhesitatingly recommend it.

So why is it that, this review finally completed, I shall not be continuing to play Crasimoff's World? In the final analysis I failed to get sufficiently involved in the game to generate the necessary enthusiasm. For me the enjoyment of a fantasy game comes from the face-to-face interaction from the players, the way they react to events, their attempts to role-play a character. While there is plenty of contact, it is with 'characters' through notes forwarded by the GM rather than with players as individuals, and is, for my taste at least, too impersonal. It should be noted that exactly the same criticisms could be applied to playing the D&D game by post — it is not the game I dislike, merely the method of playing it. Readers must judge for themselves whether a well-written scenario, run efficiently in this manner, will appeal to them.

Nick Shears played **WARBOID WORLD**, a game where players represent supercomputers in a post-holocaust world. In its original US version Warboid World precluded all player interaction but in the UK version players can have their addresses published. Generally, however, player interaction proved to be very difficult. This lack of communication, it was felt, cut out a great deal of the expected enjoyment found in computer games — the complicated scenarios involving numerous players, facilitated only by a complex rulebook looked after by the silicon magic.

It seems that the interest needed to come from the actual scenario, and again, we were unimpressed, for a future world populated by warring robots and subterranean computers was felt to be extremely abstract. There are no characters whatsoever, and while there are different types of Boid, this simply serves to make the writing of orders more complicated — each Boid behaves in a different way, needs its orders written differently and even has those orders processed at a different moment in the sequence. This is a game whose appeal is much closer to chess or to a conventional wargame.

In later stages, when players meet each others' Boids, it may well become more interesting, but at £1.75 a turn, it is expensive to find out!

Initially I was offered two games from Mitre Games: **Tribes of Crane** and **Starmaster**. These are two of the most famous pbm games around, so it was very regrettable that the player concerned with Tribes of Crane never really got to grips with the game. Playing these games demands an amount of efficiency and enthusiasm, and people being people, these attributes are not always forthcoming. Suffice it to say that the Tribes of Crane review never really got started — apologies to Mitre.

On the other side of the coin, you have already read of the thought and originality that Steve Doubleday put into designing his creature for **STARMASTER**; you will doubtless shudder as you recall the hideous, tripoidal Rokkor.

Unfortunately, after this good start, the GM lapsed into silence. Steve and I wrote to him but failed to elicit a response.

It now appears that the problems were entirely concerned with the GM who left Mitre unexpectedly at that time (the games are not, in fact, computer-moderated, as I originally believed). A new GM is currently running Starmaster and has, indeed, made some improvements to the system. By all accounts Starmaster is now running well, with return times down to the 'following day', and the hiccup which Steve encountered has been the only blemish during several years of smooth running.

The only conclusions we can draw from these events are that Mitre's communications must have been somewhat suspect and that hopefully things have now been improved. Certainly, for the short time in which he was playing the game, Steve was extremely enthusiastic. He enjoyed the concept of inventing a world and an alien species and was looking forward to seeing how his Rokkor fared against other people's creations.

Undoubtedly, professional pbm games offer a style of gaming unavailable elsewhere. The games reviewed here involved either a very large and detailed fantasy world or a complex simulation run with the aid of a computer. If this is the form of game you want, then the pbm world will provide it. Again, one can expect from professionals the simple efficiency and dependability which so often proves to be the pitfall of the amateur hobby. Comparing these games to those offered in the amateur zines, they offer very little in the way of personality, game reports are solely functional; the reviewers, used to a world where making a financial loss is viewed as a point of pride, found the games expensive. Once again, however, one has to judge this expense against the time spent on creating a creature such as the Rokkor.

In the final analysis it is a matter of taste; if you enjoy the game sufficiently, you will not find it too expensive, and if something like Crasimoff's World sounds like your sort of game, then you will not find it in the amateur zines.

Now, if a game of Diplomacy is more your line...

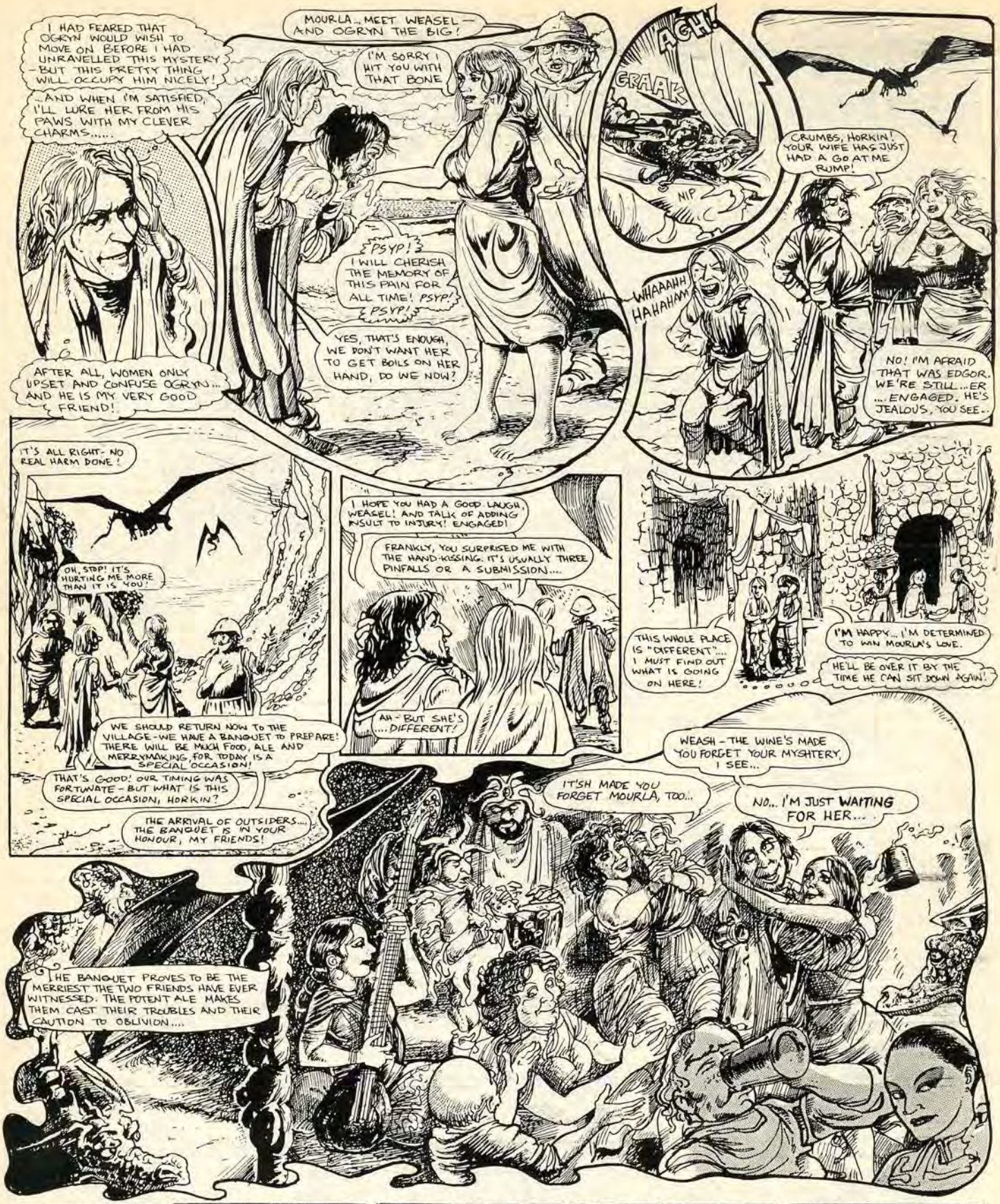
Brian Creese

THE PHALANX

AN EPIC IN TWELVE CHUNKS.
by R. Grenville-Evans.
CHUNK The Second:
MOURLA.

WEASEL THE FAIRLY CLEVER, AND OGRYN THE BIG, WHILST LOOKING FOR ADVENTURE, HAVE CHANCED UPON THE VALLEY OF THE PHALANX, WHICH IS, UNBEKNOWNEST TO THEM, UNDER A SUBTLE, SINISTER SPELL. THEY MEET AN OLD MAN CALLED HORKIN WHO, AFTER PREVENTING THEM FROM TRYING TO KILL A SMALL DRAGON WHICH HE CLAIMS IS HIS WIFE, BECOMES MYSTERIOUSLY FRIENDLY TO THE TRAVELLERS....

I SUPPOSE THIS MUST SEEM STRANGE TO YOU OUTSIDERS - ME TELLING YOU THAT THIS DRAGON IS MY WIFE...
NAH - MY UNCLE ERID SAYS MY AUNTIE'S REALLY A...
SHUT UP, OGRYN! TELL US WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, MR HORKIN!
"WELL - YEARS AGO, THE PEOPLE LIVED IN A FISHING TOWN A MILE OVER THE HILL CALLED RAINBOW COVE - THE CAVES WERE RICH WITH PRECIOUS STONES, AND SEVERAL FOREIGN DEALERS MINED THEM...
"... THE ACTIVITY WAS GOOD FOR THE VILLAGE, AND THE TRADERS WERE FAIR TO US - BUT THEY GOT WHAT THEY WANTED, AND THE GEMS WERE USELESS TO US ANYWAY...
"BUT THERE CAME A STORM, AS FROM HELL... THE VILLAGE AND ALL OF THE BOATS WERE DESTROYED AND MANY LIVES LOST...
"... THE GULF WAS BLOCKED BY LANDSLIDES... BUT SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF THOSE MERMAIDS, NO MAN WILL VENTURE OUT IN A BOAT FOR FEAR OF HIS SOUL...
NICE BEACH. DO YOU SEE MUCH OF THE MERMAIDS, HORKIN?
NO, WE-ER-ARE REDUCING THEIR NUMBER. THEY'RE A BIT WARY OF US JUST NOWADAYS.
MRS HORKIN'S GOOD AT CATCHING STICKS, ISN'T SHE!
THE HIGH PRIEST, BANSHURGA, SAYS THAT THE DRAGON CARRIES THE SPIRIT OF THE LOST ONE, SO MUST CARRY THEIR NAME! COME - DIVINA MUST HAVE HER DAILY EXCERCISE....
"WE STILL HAVE TRAVELLERS FROM INLAND — BUT THEY NEVER STAY LONG. DID I TELL YOU ABOUT MY WIFE? WHEN ONE OF OUR NUMBER IS "TAKEN", THE SPIRIT OF THE VALLEY SENDS A LITTLE DRAGON TO WATCH OVER THE BEREAVED. MY WIFE, DIVINA, WAS ONE OF THE FIRST..."
MM, YES, THERE'S SOMETHING VAGUELY SATISFYING ABOUT HAVING THE SPIRIT OF ONE'S WIFE CHASE AFTER STICKS!
ARE THERE MANY OTHER DRAGONS IN THE VILLAGE?
ONLY ABOUT THIRTY.
OW!
OH! LOOK OUT!
OH, DEAR! I WAS THROWING THAT FOR EDGOR TO FETCH! I DIDN'T MEAN TO BRAIN YOU!
YOU'D HAVE YOUR WORK CUT OUT, AND.... THE PLEASURE WAS ALL MINE, FAIR ONE!
AH - HERE WE HAVE MOURLA - SHE DOESN'T ACTUALLY DO ANYTHING APART FROM DEMONSTRATE HOW LITTLE CONTROL SHE HAS OVER HER 'GUARDIAN'... THAT'S EDGOR - ONCE HER FIANCE...


I HAD FEARED THAT OGRYN WOULD WISH TO MOVE ON BEFORE I HAD UNRAVELLED THIS MYSTERY - BUT THIS PRETTY THING WILL OCCUPY HIM NICELY!
...AND WHEN I'M SATISFIED, I'LL LURE HER FROM HIS PAWS WITH MY CLEVER CHARMS.....
MOURLA... MEET WEASEL — AND OGRYN THE BIG!
I'M SORRY I HIT YOU WITH THAT BONE
PSYP! I WILL CHERISH THE MEMORY OF THIS PAIN FOR ALL TIME! PSYP! PSYP!
YES, THAT'S ENOUGH, WE DON'T WANT HER TO GET BOILS ON HER HAND, DO WE NOW?
AFTER ALL, WOMEN ONLY UPSET AND CONFUSE OGRYN... AND HE IS MY VERY GOOD FRIEND!
AGH!
CRAAK
NIP
CRUMBS, HORKIN! YOUR WIFE HAS JUST HAD A GO AT ME RUMP!
WHAAAHH HAHAHAM
NO! I'M AFRAID THAT WAS EDGOR. WE'RE STILL...ER ...ENGAGED. HE'S JEALOUS, YOU SEE..
IT'S ALL RIGHT- NO REAL HARM DONE!
OH, STOP! IT'S HURTING ME MORE THAN IT IS YOU!
I HOPE YOU HAD A GOOD LAUGH, WEASEL! AND TALK OF ADDING INSULT TO INJURY! ENGAGED!
FRANKLY, YOU SURPRISED ME WITH THE HAND-KISSING. IT'S USUALLY THREE PINFALLS OR A SUBMISSION....
AH - BUT SHE'S ....DIFFERENT!
THIS WHOLE PLACE IS "DIFFERENT".... I MUST FIND OUT WHAT IS GOING ON HERE!
I'M HAPPY... I'M DETERMINED TO WIN MOURLA'S LOVE.
HE'LL BE OVER IT BY THE TIME HE CAN SIT DOWN AGAIN!
WE SHOULD RETURN NOW TO THE VILLAGE - WE HAVE A BANQUET TO PREPARE! THERE WILL BE MUCH FOOD, ALE AND MERRYMAKING, FOR TODAY IS A SPECIAL OCCASION!
THAT'S GOOD! OUR TIMING WAS FORTUNATE - BUT WHAT IS THIS SPECIAL OCCASION, HORKIN?
THE ARRIVAL OF OUTSIDERS... THE BANQUET IS IN YOUR HONOUR, MY FRIENDS!
WEASH - THE WINE'S MADE YOU FORGET YOUR MYSHTERY, I SEE...
IT'SH MADE YOU FORGET MOURLA, TOO...
NO... I'M JUST WAITING FOR HER...
THE BANQUET PROVES TO BE THE MERRIEST THE TWO FRIENDS HAVE EVER WITNESSED. THE POTENT ALE MAKES THEM CAST THEIR TROUBLES AND THEIR CAUTION TO OBLIVION....
BUT THEY SLUMP INTO A DRUNKEN DOZE, IN THE DEEP RED LIGHT OF THE SETTING SUN. THEY DO NOT HEAR THE GHOSTLY CHIMES WHICH PRECEDE THE SHUFFLING FEET OF THE VILLAGERS - BUT THEY ARE AWAKENED BY ANOTHER SOUND...
AWW! OGRYN! OGRYN, IS THAT YOUR STOMACH MAKING THAT NOISE? STOP IT, I'VE GOT A HEADACHE AS IT IS!
WHASSA MARRER?!
SNARRGLLERRRR

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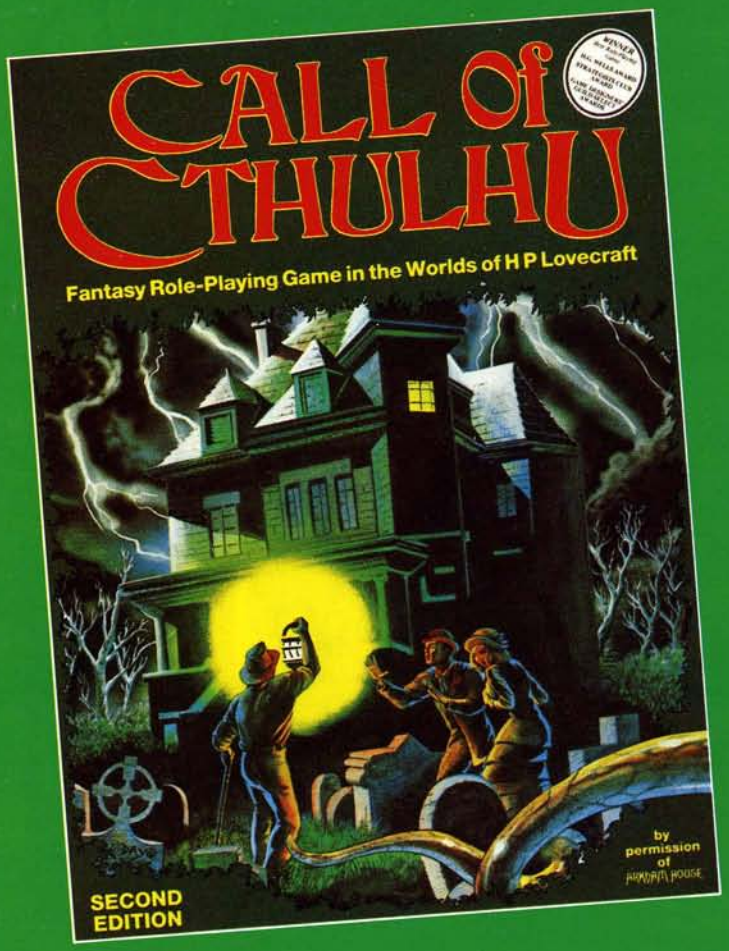
In Call of Cthulhu even librarians get bitten by the Formless Spawn of Tsathoggua



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